

# The London Quarterly and Holborn Review

RELIGION, THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY, LITERATURE,  
HISTORY and SOCIOLOGY.

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# THE LONDON QUARTERLY AND HOLBORN REVIEW

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## THE INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION ON CHRISTIAN ETHICS (INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL)

### I

1. 'What shall I do to be saved?' is the universal and permanent human cry. 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved' is the Gospel's answer. This was the central issue of the Reformation; it challenged the Roman Church because it put obstacles in the way of salvation, obscuring this sure and simple Gospel. Luther and Calvin, however much they differed on theological and ecclesiastical, ethical and political questions, had much in common in religious experience, and for both the doctrine of *justification by faith* was the test of a *standing or a falling Church*. This doctrine answers the questions: How can a guilty man be forgiven? How can his relation to God, changed by sin, be restored to what God desires it to be?

2. But there is another question asked, which needs to be answered if the Christian conception of salvation is to be complete. It is this: How can a sinful man be made holy? The answer of the Gospel is the doctrine of *sanctification by the Spirit*. Paul answers both questions, in the doctrine of justification in Romans i-v, and that of sanctification in Romans vi-viii. His question in Romans vi.1, 'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?' shows the danger of severing in doctrine what God has joined together in the experience of His grace. God makes righteous whom He reckons righteous; He forgives that He may make holy. God loves not only that we may live in fellowship with Him as His forgiven children, but also that we may grow in likeness to the perfection of the Father.

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3. It is the reproach and the scandal of some types of evangelism that they have put asunder what God has joined together. Luther recognizes the essential connexion between forgiveness and holiness; but it is Calvin who gives the greater emphasis to it. For this reason it seems to me that 'justification by faith' is not an adequate standard or watchword. It is only part of Paul's conception of salvation, and in my judgement as an expression of his experience the less distinctive part; however important it was for his immediate purpose against the Judaisers, and for the Reformers against the Roman Church. Separated from the doctrine of sanctification it has encouraged a low standard of living among many professing Christians. But on the other hand the pursuit of holiness needs for its hopeful and helpful start the assurance of forgiveness, for a burdened conscience means an enslaved will, and a conscience cleansed a will made free. A more adequate standard or watchword is that of *salvation*. Full salvation, justification and sanctification, forgiveness and holiness, is assured and secured, *sola gratia sola fide*, by grace alone through faith alone: for if grace makes holy as well as forgives, faith will be exercised in good works as the fruit of the Spirit. In confining myself now to Christian character, I assume that it has its living roots in Christian experience.

### II

1. We must recognize that there are different types of Christian life, all genuine and sincere; and yet all not equally satisfying and effective. Some men are more concerned about the assurance of forgiveness; and others are more strenuous in the pursuit of holiness. We can recognize this difference even in the great Reformers, and both great Christians, Luther and Calvin; and one factor in the development of their theology which at least partly accounts for the difference, although personal characteristics no doubt had the greater influence, is this: Luther was most concerned about the human need, Calvin about the divine purpose. His

guiding principle was *solī deo gloria*, to God alone glory. The answer to the first question in the Shorter Catechism expresses this conviction: *What is man's chief end?* 'To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.' It would be an injustice to Luther to say that he was indifferent to sanctification, although he gave such prominence to justification, as he did teach the duties of the Christian life; but Calvin, because of his guiding principle, does deal more adequately with the ways in which men are chosen and called to glorify God in their godly living. Hence Calvinism has made a much greater contribution to Christian ethics (individual and social) than has Lutheranism. So long as salvation (primarily the forgiveness of sin) was secured, and the obstacles of the Roman Church were removed, Luther desired as little change as possible, either in the Church or the world around; and he was carried further by the logic of events than he would of his own choice have gone. He remained a Medieval peasant to the end, growing more conservative, as the radical movements made him afraid. He came to distrust the Christian people, and to put his confidence in 'godly' princes. Calvin was ready for any change which a consistent logic in the interpretation of the Scriptures as the ultimate and absolute authority for thought and life might demand. He was much less Medieval and much more modern in outlook. He saw the need of changes, and he aimed at a complete transformation of society as well as Church by the application to all affairs of the law of God as contained in the Holy Scriptures. Not only was he more progressive than Luther; but his influence has been wider and greater. Luther's may be a more attractive, but Calvin's is a more consistent and potent personality.

2. In comparing the subsequent fortunes of Calvinism and Lutheranism, we must take into account besides this difference between the two men those of circumstance, Germany in the one case, Geneva in the other, although the circumstances doubtless reacted on the men. Luther

in Germany could not, even if he would, have influenced his social surroundings as could Calvin in Geneva. There was the man to meet the opportunity and the opportunity to meet the man. If Calvin denied the work of the law in the Old as in the New Testament as the condition of salvation, he recognized the law of God as regulative of the saved life. Sinai led to Calvary in the discipline of repentance from sin, but it also followed Calvary as guiding in the life of holiness. It is characteristic of the difference of Calvinism from Lutheranism that it adds to the marks of the Church—the true preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Sacraments—the godly discipline of the members of the Church. It would not be just to accuse Lutheranism of indifference to the moral character of the Christian people; but its moral standard was less rigorous, and its reforming zeal less ardent than that of Calvinism. Yet it is only just to Calvinism to recognize that it had a more vigilant care for the purity of the Christian fellowship which was shown specially in Puritanism, that sometimes lapsed into Pharisaism. It tended to legalism, and did not fully express the Pauline principle that the Christian is not under law, but under grace. Less tolerant of the authority of the State in the Church as charged with the duty of interpreting and enforcing the law of God not only within its fellowship, but for the general community, Calvin endeavoured to use the State under the direction of the Church to make Geneva a City of God, whereas Luther was content to leave to the ruler the control of the religion in his realm; '*cujus regio, ejus religio.*'

3. In this connexion a claim which is often made for the Reformation must be dealt with, i.e., that religious liberty is due to it. It is true that the divisions of the Christian Church made mutual toleration an imperative necessity. But none of the Reformers advocated toleration: they were ready to defend the persecution of religious opinions other than their own; and had no objection to an alliance of the

Church with the State for the repression of heresy or schism. The yoke of the dogmatic theologian replaced the yoke of the priest. The Protestant Confessions and Catechisms show much more meticulous care to keep the individual believer out of the paths of error in the way of truth than do the oecumenical creeds. The unity of the Reformation movement was broken, because Luther after the Marburg Conversations with Zwingli, refused to have any Christian fellowship with him because they could not agree on one of the fifteen articles proposed, namely that which dealt with the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper. It is said that when Melancthon heard that the Anabaptists were being drowned, he made this cruel and wicked jest: 'they believe in immersion; give it them.' Calvin must share responsibility for the burning of Servetus because of his teaching on the Trinity. Some of us, if we had lived then, would have had 'short shrift' at the hands of the Reformers. Religious toleration owes more to such men as Locke and Spinoza than to early Protestantism. The sects, also, to whom reference will be made later, claimed toleration for themselves in accordance with their principles. These are the words of Dr. Karl Barth, the theological idol of the hour: 'The concept of toleration originates in political and philosophical principles which are not only alien but even opposed to the Gospel. Their triumph within the various Churches was a symptom of inward weakness and not of strength. Among its results is one which ought not to be overlooked, namely, that the Churches have in increasing measure lost their character and their significance in the life of the peoples; and just in proportion as the Churches awoke to fresh self-consciousness as holders of a confession, so did it become manifest, that tolerance, so far from removing the old separations, had not affected them in the least.' (*The Church and the Churches*, in Pamphlet No. 75 of the Faith and Order Continuation Committee.) The remedy would surely be, not in a renewal of intolerance, but in a revision of the

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Confessions, which divide the Churches. The Church in Germany in its present controversy with the State is being weakened by a renewal of such intolerance, a theological reaction to these confessions. One other consideration is here relevant. Neither Luther nor Calvin intended these Protestant Confessions to take the place of the oecumenical creeds: they accepted them as statements of Christian 'orthodoxy,' not for political reasons only, but because they both claimed to be maintaining the continuity of the Christian Church against Roman perversions and corruptions. There were not new Churches founded by them, but theirs was the recovery of the Church. This was the distinction between Lutheranism and Calvinism on the one hand and the sects—Anabaptist and Separatists—on the other, who were not solicitous about the preservation of continuity, but the reform of the Church in accordance with the New Testament as they understood its teaching.

### III

1. It is the great merit of Luther that, in opposition to monasticism, and the distinction of the 'secular' and the 'religious life,' he asserted the value of the earthly calling in the world; but he did not adequately recognize that the conditions of life in the world might be such as to hinder and even prevent the fulfilment of that calling according to Christian standards. This too exclusive concern for the salvation of the individual soul, and his comparative indifference to the progress of society resulted in a fundamental *dualism* in his ethical teaching. The Christian lives in two spheres—the order of grace and the ways of the world, which differ in quality and are not on the same plane. Belonging to the Kingdom of God, Christians are but pilgrims and strangers in the kingdom of the world. In the one sin is forgiven, in the other punished; in the one rights are renounced, in the other demanded; the one is under law, the other under grace. In the sacred sphere the Gospel guides; in



the secular sphere are ordinances of the human reason, the natural wisdom implanted by God as Creator. The Christian must hold himself aloof as much as he can, and yet so far as he must share in the ways of the world, he must conform to its laws, looking for forgiveness, being justified by faith, and not works.

2. This dualism survives in Lutheranism to-day. At the Stockholm Conference in 1927 most of the German delegates confined distinctive Christian ethics to philanthropy (*Liebesthätigkeit*). In the 'Innere Mission' the German Churches have set a splendid example of extensive and varied, gracious and generous philanthropy organized with a characteristic thoroughness. What was described as Anglo-American *activism* was condemned as an irreverent attempt to establish the Kingdom of God on earth by the efforts of man. The German view of that Kingdom, like Luther's, was purely eschatological, the act of God in the last days of this world. Some modification of this rigid attitude was confessed by some of the German delegates before the end of the Conference; there was some recognition of the duty of the Church to seek changes in the social order in accordance with Christian principles, which would lessen this dualism.

3. It is this same dualism which is the basis of the policy of the 'German Christian' party in the Evangelical Church. To give some illustration: in the sphere of grace, converted Jews, 'Hebrew Christians,' cannot be excluded from the membership of the Christian Church; but in the sphere of the organization of the Church there must be conformity to the ways of the State, and non-Aryans may be excluded from the ministry. The Church in its policy ought to conform to the policy of the State, and in all secular affairs to popular sentiment, as in Anti-Semitism. The Church should preserve 'oecumenicity' fellowship with other Christian Churches, but internationalism and pacifism (any opposition to war) are due to rationalism, and not the Christian Gospel. And this oecumenicity does not include the right or duty of other

Christian Churches to offer any judgement according to Christian standards, on the policy of the Church in Germany on such matters. The conformity of the Church to the world is now being frankly advocated and freely practised; and the name of Luther is invoked.

4. A judgement on this dualism may be offered.

(i) Luther's view of society, no less than of nature, was *static*; God's creative decrees had established a fixed order for each sphere, natural and social, with laws which cannot be broken with impunity. Our view is *dynamic*. God wills a cosmic and a human evolution; and in the sphere of human society there are economic, political and international changes, which can be welcomed as progress only when controlled and directed by the application of the moral principles of Christianity; for without Christ evolution in every human sphere means *chaos*; in Him only can it become *Cosmos*.

(ii) Luther's view was *atomic*, ours is *organic*; nature, society, grace could be separated for him; for us the gulfs are bridged. Society has its basis in nature, and grace from God purifies and elevates the aspirations and achievements of man in society.

(iii) Again, Luther's view was *eschatological* in the narrow sense, that the end of all things was at hand. Ours is *teleological*. God is fulfilling His purpose in human history, and the end will not be a catastrophic intervention of God, but a consummation in 'the fulness of the times.' The transformation of human society by the sovereign saving activity of God in and through man is no 'forlorn hope,' but a glorious certainty. It may be that earthly conditions do not allow for the perfect Kingdom in time; it may belong to the eternal order; but an increasing conformity of the earthly actuality to the heavenly reality is both a hope and a duty.

5. It would not be right to pass over what truth there is in this teaching.

(i) We must recognize with Luther that the world around us must *remain under law*, unless and until it *submits to grace*.



Men will reap corruption from the flesh unless and until they sow unto the Spirit. Sin will be punished unless and until it is forgiven. God remains Judge unless and until He becomes Saviour. It is but slowly that the redemptive purpose of God finds its realization in the world under sin's bondage.

(ii) Morality is not a system of abstract principles applicable at any time and any place; its sphere is that of variable personal relations, and these are affected by the historical conditions. Compromise as a surrender of principle to expediency there should not be; but compromise as an adaptation of principles to the moral situation to secure the maximum moral good possible there and then there may be. With Paul the moralist must be 'all things to all men that he may save' from moral defeat to moral triumph.

(iii) So also the Church may and ought to impose a higher standard on its members, not by harsh discipline, but by tender care, than it is entitled to ask the State to impose on men outside, who have not the constraining love nor the enabling grace of Christ. So far this dualism, that the world cannot be absolutely conformed to the Church, can be recognized as provisional but must not be acquiesced in as final; it is variable in the measure in which God's grace prevails over man's sin, and His Kingdom comes into the world.

#### IV

1. Turning now to Calvinism, it is evident that it provides a broader and more solid theological basis for Christian ethics than does Lutheranism. While Luther shared with Calvin the doctrine of predestination, his interest being in the assurance which it gave to believers, it was basic for Calvin as it was not for Luther; and he worked it out with ruthless logic to the double issue—election of the saved, reprobation of the damned.

(i) As each man's destiny was determined by the will of God, *individualism* is characteristic of Calvinism, but even though each man stands singly before God, the saved indi-

viduals constitute the *holy community*, for it is in his *sanctification* by the Spirit that each man makes his election and calling sure; and the *temporal vocation* of each man expresses his *eternal election*. The law of God makes large and stern commands, and thus *asceticism* (not monastic) in daily living also marks Calvinism. 'The freedom of the Christian man' Luther had asserted now lapses towards the bondage of law.

(ii) As for the individual so for society there is the will of God revealed; and in the fulfilment of that will Church and State must co-operate in a common obedience to God. A theocracy and not a democracy is contemplated, for God appoints unequal lots for men in the world; the only equality of men before God is their common need of salvation. Nevertheless, although the constitution of Church and State in Geneva was an oligarchy, and in view of Calvin's dominating influence almost an *autocracy*, a *democratic* tendency appears in the emphasis on the individual's welfare as the end of government; and the historical influence of Calvinism has been in that direction. It has inspired struggles for religious, national and political liberty.

(iii) We may speak of the internationalism of Calvinism in a fuller sense than that of Lutheranism, for it spread more widely than did Lutheranism. Geneva has influenced not Switzerland and France only, but the Netherlands, Great Britain with all its dominions and dependencies, and also the United States of America, whilst Lutheranism has been almost altogether confined to Germany and the Scandinavian countries. There are Lutheran communities in many other lands; but they do not in these exercise as dominant an influence on the national life as has Calvinism in the lands mentioned.

2. An aspect of the subject which has a present interest is the attempt which is made by some Anglo-Catholics to debit Protestantism generally, and Calvinism especially, with the evils of Capitalism. To Calvin is ascribed the blame of having modified the Medieval prohibition of usury in admit-

ting the legitimacy of interest on loans for gainful use. The answer to this charge must be very briefly given.

(i) Modern Capitalism has its beginnings in the thirteenth century, and Catholic cities no less than the Protestant after the fifteenth century shared in its development. The new commercial situation compelled a reconsideration of the question of usury. While the Papacy did not withdraw the prohibition of usury, which had been widely more honoured in the breach than the observance, under various pretexts interest on loans to be used in trade was recognized as legitimate by Catholic casuists. This concession was denounced by Luther as one of the sins of the Papacy. Calvin, more modern in outlook, took account of the actual situation and admitted the legitimacy of interest, but with such restrictive conditions that as Tawney puts it: 'the condonation can have offered but tepid consolation to the devout money lender.' (*Religion and the Rise of Modern Capitalism.*)

(ii) That there has been a close connexion between Calvinism and modern industrial and commercial developments must be admitted, although Weber in his book on *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, followed by Troeltsch in his *Protestantism and Progress*, has probably exaggerated the closeness of the connexion. That Puritan industry, thrift and abstinence from worldly enjoyments were a factor, even an important factor in the rapid accumulation of wealth in England may be conceded; but other factors, geographical and historical, in the industrial development, so far in advance of that of other countries, ought to be taken into account. Further, the contemporary situation in Geneva itself—a great centre of trade and banking—involved a capitalistic element in the economic ethic of Calvinism; for Calvin accepted the economic conditions of his time and place. Indeed, his belief in Divine Providence would not have allowed him to do otherwise—and he sought to Christianize them as he did the whole of life. The characteristic qualities already mentioned would strengthen the

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tendency to closer relations with industry and commerce. The elect Christian sought to glorify God by working hard, avoiding waste, and abstaining from the lusts of the flesh and the world (including in these what would now be regarded as innocent amusements), and so he grew rich; and as he was not consuming his wealth, he invested his savings in business, and grew still richer. On the other side must be placed the generosity which was shown by many of these rich men to evangelizing, missionary, and philanthropic causes. This close connexion can be blamed only if the development of Capitalism, as such, apart from the evils which must have followed in its train, is to be condemned.

(iii) Calvinism itself must not be held responsible for the policy of *laissez-faire*, the popular maxim: 'business is business,' the theoretical claim for the autonomy of the economic sphere. For Calvin himself and Calvinism in its Puritan form insisted on the strict application of Christian ethics to business, and gave no encouragement to Mammonism. So long as Calvinism kept its theological dominance, the Church claimed an ethical authority and for several generations exercised a severe moral discipline over the people.

3. While we must recognize the necessity of Capital to industry and even admit that Capitalism, or the dominance of that factor, was at a certain stage of the evolution of industry inevitable, we are now driven to recognize that, great as have been the material benefits which it has brought, it has involved very serious economic, social and moral evils to which the Christian conscience is now becoming much more sensitive. Self-interest as the *dominant motive*, and competition as the *prevalent method* of Capitalism during last century, unless held in check by State or Church are twin evils, largely responsible for the world *crisis* in, not only economics, but also politics and international relations as necessarily affected by economic interests and considerations. How far can Calvinism be held responsible? It is only if we

isolate one of its principles that the policy of *laissez-faire* can be traced back to it. The doctrine of election gave the individual so great a value, and related him so immediately to God, that an excessive *individualism* might result, as in fact it did. But this same principle as worked out, without some of the necessary checks in the sects, has probably had even a larger share in the perversion into error of a truth, which we cannot now hold in its rigidly Calvinistic form.

## V

1. While Lutheranism and Calvinism were the two prevalent and dominant types of the Reformation movement we cannot ignore the emergence of the sects, the Anabaptists of the Continent now represented by the Baptists and the Independents, now Congregationalists. On the extreme radicalisms of some of the sectaries we need not now enter, but it seems to be necessary to lay stress on three principles of the sects movement, the authority assigned to the individual conscience, the consequent challenge of the authority of the Church, and still more the consequent denial of the right of the State to interfere in the regulation of belief, worship or life. This resulted in the formation of 'gathered' Churches requiring a personal confession of faith.

2. It is evident that these principles have had an influence on the development of Christian social ethics. The claim that every man shall be his own judge in the conduct of his business, the abandonment of any Church discipline in the sphere of economics or politics, and the suspicion of any interference of the State in industry and commerce are among the most serious obstacles we have now to confront in seeking to apply Christian ethics to the whole social order. 'The corruption of the best is the worst.' While the Nonconformists of England in last century were marked by the individual and domestic virtues and for their philanthropy and progressive views in politics, they must carry a large share in the scandal of the oppressive and injurious conditions in industry and of

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the advocacy in these matters of the policy of *laissez-faire* delaying and hindering urgently necessary economic and social reforms.

3. It is incumbent on those who have inherited and share the tradition of 'the free individual in the free Church in the free State' to shew how the necessary truth these principles conserve can be detached from the errors to which they have been perverted, that they may by their legitimate influence preserve us from economic and political tyranny, and yet not commit us to an anarchy in industry and government. We cannot return to the authoritarian and intolerant Church of early Lutheranism and Calvinism; but we must advance to an order in Church and State which combines liberty with law, and reconciles the individual conscience with the communal judgement; and this can be done only as divine grace through human faith (*sola gratia sola fide*) saves us from human sin into the liberty in the Spirit of the children of God.

4. We have been speaking much in these discussions about our spiritual fathers. Of the Kings of Judah, it is written that when they died, they 'slept with their fathers.' Let the memory of ours not lull us to sleep in inactivity. We are indeed 'encompassed by a great cloud of witnesses' in which some whom we admire, may in God's judgement be less permanent than we deem them; let us thank God for them, but do not let us be always looking backward like Lot's wife, whose fate should be a warning to us, but with them let us look, not at Luther or Calvin, but only at Jesus, 'the Author and Finisher of Faith, crowned with glory and honour,' that inspired by His Presence, we may go forward in the race set before us to goals, of which they never even dreamed, but which God by His Spirit is revealing to us.

A. E. GARVIE.

## ERASMUS

THE shining name of Erasmus is in the ascendant. This July will witness the world-wide celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of his death. Recent months have brought us R. W. Chambers's glorious book on Thomas More, Stephan Zweig's brilliant sketch of Erasmus himself, and finally P. S. Allen's posthumous *Lectures and Erasmian Wayfarings*. Percy Stafford Allen, affectionately known as 'Erasmus' Allen, whose death in 1933 was so grievous a loss to sixteenth-century scholarship, is mainly responsible for the Erasmian revival. His edition of *Erasmi Epistolae* is one of the outstanding achievements of pure scholarship in our day. This immense work could only have been carried through by the generous *camaraderie* of many scholars in the world-wide republic of letters. The enterprise is thus a signal triumph of the Erasmian temper. Allen worked at it for twenty-nine years, devoting himself to the task in a religious spirit. He felt that the work (to use his own phrase) 'had been blessed.' Like his master, he was a great traveller, ransacking libraries and deciphering faded old manuscripts all over the Continent. His wife, who shared these joyous labours, tells us how her husband tried to make all easy 'for the editor who will have to do with Erasmus if we are swept away together in a railway accident.' It is a solace to know that the work of revising and seeing through the press the remaining volumes, is in the hands of Allen's friend, Professor H. W. Garrod. Garrod's memoir of Allen, prefixed to the latest volume of the *Epistolae*, is written in Latin and is called *Compendium Vitae* (the title being a pious reminiscence of Erasmus's outline of his own life). It is full of felicities, and could only have been written by one almost as completely enfranchised in the language as was Erasmus himself.

How are we to account for this revival of interest in



the old scholar of Rotterdam whose youth was spent in the incredibly remote times of Louis XI and the Wars of the Roses? Who but a few specialists now read the lives of the Stephensens, of Scaliger, Lipsius, Casaubon and the rest? But Erasmus's stature grows with the centuries. He has now attained his proper place as one of the formative and fascinating personalities in the modern world. Fisher declares in his new *History of Europe*: 'In any list of good Europeans the name of Erasmus would rank high.' His entry into life, in 1466, was woefully inauspicious. Not only was he an illegitimate child, but the son of a priest. Bereft of parents he was made over by his guardians to the Church. His mercurial nature and secular literary tastes made a monastic régime exquisitely distasteful. These thwarted rebellious years left their mark upon the man. His dubious birth, his premature vows, his passionate resentment against his fate, the starvation of a sensitive heart and delicate brain—these things filled the background of his mind with undying bitterness. Without following the Roman biographer, J. J. Mangan, all the way, we may admit that Erasmus was haunted by an anti-monastic complex, and that his attacks on monks were a survival of his helpless wrath when a prisoner in the monastery at Steyn. But there is another side. It may be asked, if Erasmus had not been thus obstructed, would he have yearned so ardently to become another St. Jerome, a Christian Cicero? His *ardor intellectualis* was stimulated by this harsh repression. Apart from this monastic purgatory, would he have pursued his self-education with such passion? And would *The Colloquies* or *In Praise of Folly* ever have been written?

Undoubtedly the turning point in his development was his first visit to England. Here he came into contact with the New Learning on its Christian side. The influence of Colet and More quietened the Parisian attitude of mere revolt, and corrected the Pagan bias of his humanism. 'When I hearken to my friend Colet, it seems to me that I am listening



to Plato himself; and did ever nature produce a sweeter, gentler, happier creature than Thomas More?'

It was with good reason that the learned young Dutch priest loved England. His wit and charm won him life-long friends among the best of the land. When he left our shores to perfect his Greek in Italy, Erasmus was a new man. He had gained enormously not only in self-knowledge and scholarship, but also in social confidence and *savoir-faire*. Above all, it was in England that he came to realize the possibility of a union between Christianity and the New Learning, the *pietas litterata* which remained his life-long ideal. Nor can we ever forget that it was during his subsequent residence in Queens' College, Cambridge, that Erasmus completed the central and epoch-making work of his life, his edition of the Greek New Testament. No printed book was ever fraught with more far-reaching issues. The next stage of his wandering life was spent at Basle. This was perhaps his happiest period. The great internationalist was on neutral ground, in a dignified, cleanly, and above all, independent city. In the establishment of Froben, the leading printer in Europe, Erasmus felt thoroughly at home. Here worked young Holbein as artist and designer, Beatus Rhenanus, Amerbach, Listrius and many another scholar. Erasmus toiled like a slave, but he was in his element, surrounded by learned colleagues who loved him, by all the latest mechanism of the new art of printing, by lovely books with their stamped bindings and metal clasps, freshly minted from the press.

His frail body, always a burden, suffered more and more, the stone keeping him face to face with death for months at a time. But though the flesh was weak, the spirit was invincible. Erasmus was a terrific worker. Three or four hours sufficed for recuperation; the remainder were devoted to ceaseless toil. Enormous editions of the Fathers (Jerome's *Letters* alone in nine folio volumes) issued from the press; Augustine, Ambrose, Cyprian, Hilary, Irenaeus, Chrysostom,

and at the end, his beloved Origen. He re-edited his New Testament four times, together with notes on the whole of it, and Paraphrases on every book save the Apocalypse. The tale of his lesser works, his innumerable letters (sometimes forty a day) to fellow-scholars in every corner of Europe, his literary, devotional and controversial pamphlets, seems almost without end. Erasmus frequently changed his place of residence, but no external changes could interrupt the unity of his intellectual life. No man ever lived more strenuously in the spirit of the Apostle's words: 'This one thing I do.'

What manner of man was this who ruled Europe from his study? Fundamentally, Erasmus was a scholar—though one should hasten to add, a *Christian scholar*, for he was as far as possible from being a pedant or bookworm. His intense pre-occupation with morality—the conduct of life—constantly alchemized his knowledge into practical wisdom. Nevertheless he was the Scholar. That was his vocation. He has often been censured because he was not a 'hero.' Well, a man cannot be everything. A man of action, a 'hero,' could not have done his work. I fancy his blue eyes would have twinkled could he have foreseen that he would be included with Luther, in a series of volumes entitled *Heroes of the Reformation*. He never felt himself to be cast for a 'heroic' rôle. Yet who can deny that in his own sphere, as scholar and man of letters, he was a hero?

The present fashion is to blame men for what they are not. It is more intelligent to concentrate on the positive side. No man sums up all the virtues—for some of the highest virtues are incompatible with one another. Luther e.g., was (as P. S. Allen admits) 'a very fine fellow,' but he had the defects of his qualities. The very qualities that fitted him to launch the Reformation—his fearlessness, his egotism, his pugnacity, his complete confidence of the correctness of his views, made him unfit to carry it on. In human affairs it is a question of a choice between work marred by personal

limitations, and none at all. In the long perspective of history, Erasmus and Luther appear not as rivals but as complementaries. It is as stupid to blame Erasmus because he was not like Luther, as to blame Luther because he was not like Erasmus.

Lavater said: 'Erasmus has one of the most expressive countenances, one of the most decisive faces, I have ever seen.' It is certainly, with those of Dante, Leonardo, Newman, Goethe, one of the *significant* faces in the world. Generations will come and go, and always Holbein's portrait in the *Salle du Louvre* will pursue them like a haunting memory. All Erasmus is there, the stillness, the solitude of the scholar, the concentration of the artist, the dangerous suggestion of irony in the compression and curve of the lips. His fingers at once light and massive, like those of a master-engraver, are adorned with rings. On his face, the hand of another master-engraver, Time, has etched the furrows of thought and just a hint of disdain. Holbein has put on his canvas not merely a man but a type. He has given us the eternal scholar.

To understand the essential truth and tragedy of the Reformation, it is enough to study Holbein's *Erasmus* and Cranach's *Luther*, side by side. This revealing contrast will give a more penetrating intuition than a score of volumes could teach.

'Fastidiosule'—exclaimed Budé to Erasmus, with smiling malice. Let us admit that Erasmus was fastidious. In an age of unspeakable coarseness he was a solitary hygienist. The vermin, the bad food, the noise and stench of the inns, nauseated him, and made his never-ending pilgrimages in search of knowledge, a martyrdom. It is one of the ironies of history that this sensitive lover of things bright and clean, whose servants must put a vase of flowers on his table—this most unfanatical, nay anti-fanatical of men, this sprightly champion of toleration and intellectual adventure, this critic of national egotism and life-long advocate of world-peace, should have been fated to live in the sixteenth century!

Think of the furious breed of his contemporaries—the militant Julius II, the full-blooded Henry VIII and François I, the primitive bull-necked Luther. Think of Calvin with his relentless discipline and Loyola with his fiery purpose. Think of Servetus thrust into the flames by Calvin, amid the plaudits of the other reformers; of Huss, Dolet and Berquin (Erasmus's pupil) burned at the stake; of More and Fisher beheaded, and Muntzer tortured to death with more than Asiatic savagery. Think of the outrages of the Peasants' Revolt, and the crazy excesses of the Anabaptists; of the massacres and hideous religious wars, surpassing in devilry anything in Dante's *Inferno*. Erasmus was born out of due time. He was a reasonable man whose tragedy it was to live in an age when almost every other great man conspicuously failed to keep his temper. He felt it to be worse than wicked—it was stupid to be vehement and one-sided. It was the mark of the plebeian. Characteristically, his first published work was called *Anti-barbari*. In one way or another, it was his theme through life.

Erasmus had more than a little in common with Matthew Arnold—the same ironical impatience with *philistinism*, the same faith in culture, the same dislike of intellectual pedantry, sectarianism, and social folly, the same dream of 'Totality,' of reconciling Hebraism and Hellenism; perhaps we may add a touch of the same disconcerting superiority. Imagine poor Arnold, condemned to live in the early sixteenth century!

One does not grudge Luther's *Table Talk* its fame, but what would one not give for a similar record of Erasmus's conversations with Thomas More? Gifted with a marvellous memory, flashing wit, the artist's verbal dexterity, Erasmus was always the centre of his circle. Zwingli writes to him: 'As I read, it seemed to me that I could hear you speaking and could see your dapper figure moving about before me in the pleasantest manner.' There was absolutely no humbug or bombast about Erasmus. He confesses to Longolius: 'Effundo verius quam scribo omnia,' (I precipitate rather

than compose). This flavour of vividness and spontaneity must have made him one of the world's most delightful talkers, as it makes his letters the most interesting ever written by a man. The Elector Frederick once asked him whether Martin Luther was really in error. With that characteristic raising of his eyebrows Erasmus answered like lightning: 'Luther peccavit in duobus, nempe quod tetigit coronam Pontificis, et ventris monachorum,' (O rather! and in two ways, first that he has attacked the Pope's crown, and next the monks' bellies). 'Ah!' he sighed, 'would that I felt as sure about anything as Luther feels about everything!' In a more serious, but still epigrammatic vein: 'The only true way of worshipping the saints is to imitate their virtues.'

Beneath Erasmus's apparent levity there was a deadly seriousness. He had the French gift of combining gaiety and earnestness. As Coleridge put it: 'It is the merit of Erasmus that all his jests can be translated into arguments.' Melchior Adam puts the same truth in other words: 'Pontifici Romano plus nocuit jocando quam Lutherus stomachando' (His jests hit the Pope harder than Luther's wrath).

Erasmus believed in *Sophrosyne*, that central Greek word for balance; what the French call *justesse*. He was a Greek in his emphasis on the liberating power of knowledge. Like Socrates he believed that moral perversity, whether folly, cunning or violence, was really due to ignorance. What crippled mankind was not only original sin but aboriginal stupidity. In the long run the most effective instrument against the tyranny of superstition, passion and blind force in all their forms, was the trained and enlightened human mind. Having this faith, Erasmus did his utmost to promote Education. In an age when men asked: 'Who could bear to spend his life among boys in school if he could keep body and soul together in any other way?' Erasmus strove to raise both the qualifications and status of the teaching profession, impressing upon the instructors of youth a sense of the dignity, or rather the sacredness, of their office.

In the light of subsequent history it must be admitted that the expectations of Erasmus were too optimistic. Even while he was preaching enlightenment, virtue and concord, Machiavelli was elaborating a very different programme based on an unyielding conviction of man's brutality, cunning and greed. An intellectual, if ever there was one, Erasmus was constitutionally incapable of doing justice to the dreadful power of man's irrational instincts and passions. Before he found peace in death, he was constrained to groan, like Bishop Butler, over 'the immoral thoughtlessness of men.'

Nevertheless, his sweet delusion that the Age of Reason was beginning to dawn was something better than perverse optimism. After all, it was a unique age of re-birth, of new marvels in geographical discovery, in art, in scholarship, printing, astronomy. A humanist Pope was on the throne; Gutenberg's press could speed enlightenment over the whole world; lettered young princes, Henry, Francis and Charles, were ruling Western Europe, and as late as 1518 were treating for universal peace. The spirit of confidence and emancipation was in the air: 'O saeculum, O litterae,' cried Ulrich von Hutten, 'juvat vivere.'

To be alive was bliss indeed  
But to be young was very heaven.

Alas! it was a dream. Let us return thanks that it ever existed. Let us believe that Erasmus and his friends were not mistaken, only premature; and that the race is destined to some better thing than playing the same old game of greed, pride and lust to the end of time.

Through Erasmus, Greece rose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand. The stiff paganism of the Renaissance can be judged by the fact that 24,000 books had been printed by the new presses in Europe before the Greek New Testament was attempted. 'Letters,' said Erasmus, 'had remained pagan in Italy until I taught them to speak of Christ.'

In the perennial debate between Christ and Apollo (a debate intensified by the Reformation), Erasmus is the advocate of reconciliation. Christianity and Classical Antiquity, Scientific Thought and Theology, Renaissance and Reformation, could be and should be, harmonized. In spite of the tension and friction they provoked, they were made for one another; each was defective in the other's absence. As Fisher puts it: 'He embodied with surpassing attractiveness and brilliance that tradition of Christian classical culture which was, and remains, the common possession of all Europe.' Erasmus lays down the far-reaching principle: 'Whenever you encounter truth, look upon it as Christian.' He sees everywhere the principle of continuity, and therefore of unity; a unity which is consummated in the Incarnation. The Bible is not primarily a revelation of supernatural knowledge; it is the revelation of God Himself at work in history for the redemption of mankind.

In his brilliant treatise *Les Origines de la Théologie Moderne* (censored by Rome, and now unprocurable) the Abbé Humbert showed that it is in Erasmus that the modern historical and critical sense really begins to awaken. Two instances must suffice: 'If we know not only the situation of the peoples among whom the recorded events happen, and to whom the Apostles wrote, but also their origin, their manners, their institutions, their genius—what light, nay rather, what life it puts into the study of the sacred texts.' Again, 'The Apostles learned Greek not from the orations of Demosthenes, but from the common conversation and usage of life.'

The great heart of Dante was well-nigh broken because he might not give even to his beloved Virgil a place in Paradise. Erasmus's emancipated mind had no such difficulty. He affirms that Plato and Seneca had as much right to a high place in heaven as many a Christian saint. 'When I think of the Athenian martyr, I can scarcely refrain from saying: "Sancte Socrate, ora pro nobis".'



It is not unjust to assert that Luther had not a glimpse of the final unity of Truth. Erasmus was a great reconciler. A lover of Origen, he was a champion of that historical and comparative school, ranging from the Alexandrians to the Cambridge Platonists and Westcott, which regards Christianity not as the rival or opponent of extra-Biblical truth but as its continuation and climax.

Any theory that dismisses Erasmus as a sixteenth-century Lucian or Voltaire, or as a merely destructive critic of ecclesiastical abuses, comes far short of the truth. He had his own carefully thought-out scheme of constructive reform.

First of all, taking advantage of the new miracle of the printing-press, he would give to Europe the New Testament in its original tongue, purged as far as possible from error and obscurity. Those who accuse Erasmus of cowardice should remember the extreme daring of his edition of the New Testament. This deliberate setting aside of the sacrosanct Vulgate with all its official prestige, as a second-hand and erroneous document, was perhaps in its full significance the most definite literary division between the middle and the modern age. This pioneer Greek Testament was accompanied by an original Latin version. In order to elucidate the sacred text Erasmus published a folio volume of critical notes, following up this by his series of Paraphrases of which a copy in English was placed in every parish church in England.

After the Bible, the Fathers. In twenty years of prodigious industry Erasmus had brought to light practically the whole of Christian antiquity. Of course, this pioneer work, judged by modern standards, was hasty and imperfect. But it was he who laid the foundations. By virtue of his courage, scientific detachment and critical methods, Erasmus deserves to be called the father of modern Biblical study. Thus there was both a negative and positive side to his work. His daring and witty exposure of every sort of ecclesiastical scandal cleared the ground for his positive contribution. He had his



own clear conception of history, of religion, of what a reformation of Christianity and the Church really meant, and of what part he himself might take. From this line of thought and procedure, he never deviated. It is too often forgotten that Erasmus also had his inflexible 'Ich kann nicht anders.'

A generation that has lived during the Great War and the twenty post-war years tormented by violent national passions, has reason to appreciate Erasmus's life-long service to the cause of Peace and European Unity. We, alas, are only too familiar with the nationalist conception of States as gladiators in the European arena. Modern historians (particularly the Dutch) comment unfavourably upon Erasmus's lack of patriotism. He is charged with blindness or indifference to the outstanding mark of his time, viz., the uprising of Nationality. (A similar charge is levelled at Thomas More.)

Erasmus and More will not be understood unless we remember that their deepest and most sacred conception was that of the unity of European civilization, of Christendom. They belonged not to the 'modern' period, but to the last transitional era of the Middle Ages. Now the absence of Nationality, or at any rate, its emphatic subordination, is the outstanding characteristic of the Medieval period. Law, letters, religion, art were all international. With this aspect of the old order both Erasmus and More were deeply in love. Erasmus lived for *unity*. More died for it. So far from being blind to the nationalist movements of their day, they saw only too well. With prevenient eyes they perceived the menace of that surging tide all around them—a nationalism defiantly self-seeking and scorning the idea of any duty to Europe as a whole. There had been warnings enough. The catastrophe of the Councils of Constance and of Basle lay in the fact that national sentiment had got the bit between its teeth and was already too strong for joint European action.

In the face of Renaissance sovereigns in the first flush of nationalist insolence and tyranny, Erasmus proclaimed the

ideal of a United Europe. The things that really separated men were not mountains, rivers or seas, but ignorance, folly, brutality. Erasmus was a sane man in a mad world. While English, French, Germans, Spaniards, Italians were rushing to war, Erasmus cried: 'Why should such foolish names keep us apart since we are united in the name of Christ?' To Erasmus (as to More) European war was civil war.

It may, of course, be argued that in the vast oscillatory movements of history, the turn of Nationalism had come. The Reformation was largely the fruit of this insurgent Nationalism, and intensified it in its turn. Luther was not only the arm of the Lord; he was the battering-ram of German patriotism. It was this centrifugal force of the Reformation which dismayed Erasmus. If to the rising barriers of political separation and vernacular languages, were added the spiked fences of rival 'national' churches, what hope was left for the peaceful advance of mankind?

Well, we have had four centuries of fierce competitive Nationalism. And the end is not yet. The nations have rung continual changes on wars and alliances—the allies of yesterday are the enemies of to-day. In a single century England has fought for and against the United States, France, Germany, Turkey, Russia, Austria, Poland, Denmark. It is a story to justify extreme historical cynicism. No, Erasmus was not blind. He saw only too clearly the significance of what was happening. In an era of nationalist mania, when club law prevailed, he waged a life-long campaign for Peace and Unity.

The common notion about Erasmus is that he was a coward and a time-server. This charge can only be maintained by those to whom out and out partisanship is the one authentic note of courage. His remonstrances with warlike monarchs, his audacious exposure of ecclesiastical abuses, his critical daring, are not the marks of a coward. Only a brave and sincere man, at a time when scholars were entirely dependent on royal or episcopal patronage, could have

expostulated so fearlessly with the great ones of the earth. No man, again, ever made a more dogged fight for the inner freedom and integrity which are the very soul of the artist or scholar. An orphan, a bastard, whose guardians were only anxious to get him off their hands, becomes through his own efforts, the most famous and influential figure of his age. No weakling could have achieved such a position. Henry VIII, Francis, Ferdinand, Charles, three Popes in succession—all tried to catch him. Flattery, bribery, the offer of bishoprics and a cardinal's hat—all failed. Although his purse was slender, and his tastes expensive, he would not put himself up for auction or wear a livery. Personally, we would be content to judge the worth of Erasmus by one fact alone. Thomas More loved him through life. 'Erasmus, my darling,' he called him. To win and keep the friendship of More is a sufficient guarantee of Erasmus's courage and integrity.

Recent critics, while conceding that Erasmus was a great intellectual—'the prince of Dons'—suggest that he was essentially non-religious. Writing of Erasmus's *De Libero Arbitrio* (his answer to Luther's doctrine of 'The Enslaved Will'), Harnack writes: 'It is the crown of his literary work, but it is an entirely worldly, at bottom, an irreligious treatise.'

This raises the question of what is meant by 'religious.' Was Cromwell more religious than Benjamin Whichcote, or the Puritans than Hooker, or Bunyan than Jeremy Taylor?

Erasmus was not a 'daimonic' personality. He never gazed, never felt that he needed to gaze, into the abyss as did Shakespeare or Pascal. He was a stranger to the psychological earthquakes of a Loyola, a Luther, a Dostoevsky—those prolonged and terrifying crises bordering upon, if not actually passing, the bounds of madness. Erasmus was not obsessed with 'spiritual' fears, nor worried about his 'salvation.' He knew nothing of Paul's shattering experience on the Damascus road, nothing of Augustine's desperate struggle for peace, nothing of the exceeding bitter cry of Bunyan's

*Grace Abounding.* If these psychopathic storms are the normal, the authentic touchstone of religion, then Erasmus was not religious. To all such contortions, despairs and ecstasies, he was a stranger. William James would have classified him with the 'once-born.' His mind was much more awakened in search of truth and knowledge than his heart and conscience in search of peace.

One may ask how far it is wholesome that men of Luther's abnormal make-up should, as it were, standardize religious experience. Bewilderment and distress have been caused by trying to force average men and women into the fantastic moulds of religious genius. The God-intoxicated Berserks have their place, but it is not the only place. Religion is not the exclusive possession of 'stormy' souls. Erasmus was not the 'prophetic' type, nor had he the mystical *élan*. He was once in a town where a powder magazine exploded and destroyed a house of ill-fame. Someone declared that this proved the Divine anger against guilty sinners. Erasmus calmly remarked that if such anger was indeed in evidence, it was rather against the folly of those who had built a powder magazine so near a town! The man who said that could never have fought on Luther's side.

Erasmus was a Christian scholar, not a dogmatist, still less an ecclesiastic, and least of all a fighting partisan. There was a good deal of eighteenth-century 'reasonableness' about him. In his eyes the all-important matter in religion was the life. Dogmas were interesting and important but they were subordinate to the moral issue. His home was rather in the Gospels than the Epistles. This moral and social emphasis in religion divided him from Luther, but it was sincerely held, and for it Erasmus would, if necessary, have laid down his life. He was the sworn enemy of ignorance and superstition, whether Catholic or Protestant.

History is a greater dramatist than Shakespeare. Never did she achieve a more striking effect than when, at the crisis of the religious revolution in the sixteenth century, she summoned on

to the stage Erasmus and Luther. One an ageing, shivery scholar, perpetually below par; the other with an embarrassing overplus of vitality. When Aleander set eyes on Luther in 1521, he was alarmed by 'those demoniac eyes, the rude plebeian face, with its huge crag-like brow and bones.' What a contrast to the artistic face of Erasmus, almost feminine in its sensitiveness! The two men never met in person. A deep instinct made them avoid one another—the conciliator and the fanatic, the rationalist and the enthusiast, the cosmopolitan and the patriot; one tolerant with that positive toleration which not only permits but welcomes different points of view, the other of all men the most intractable and dictatorial. Luther's self-confidence seemed to Erasmus, in a world saturated with illusion and self-deception, to be grotesque megalomania. To Erasmus, Reason was God's best gift to man; whereas Luther cried: 'Vernunft ist des Teufel's hochste hure' (Reason is the Devil's chiefest whore). To Luther, distracted and on the verge of nervous collapse, the condition of inner certitude, the glow of passionate conviction, was the most precious and necessary sensation in the world. Erasmus's distinction was, in the words of Nisard, 'De beaucoup comprendre et d'affirmer peu.'

Erasmus distrusted passion and bigotry wherever found. He recognized the urgent need for Reform as clearly as did Luther. But though agreeing with much that Luther taught (as did Pole, Cajetan, Contarini and other Roman 'moderates'), and though pleading for years with the Roman authorities to treat Luther with patience and forbearance, he inevitably recoiled from Luther's headlong methods, and then from the man himself, discerning in him that very fanaticism which he, Erasmus, was resisting in the Church itself.

It was neither fear nor fastidiousness that held him back from co-operation with the later Lutheran programme. Conscience was at stake as well as taste and prudence. In those tremendous convulsions he did not lose his balance. A profound insight into history, into the conditions of human

development and the nature of human society, inspired his pleas for moderation. He was a conservative reformer. He realized how easy it is to make and justify Church divisions and found new sects, but how enormously difficult it is to restrain or abolish them. He knew that the severance of Germany from the Roman obedience could not be brought about except through a bloody and protracted conflict. Those who distrust 'revolutions,' and who shudder at the apocalyptic woes of the religious and civil wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are tempted to agree with Goethe and Janssen, with Creighton and Huxley, that *in the long run*, Europe would have advanced more steadily under the guidance of Erasmus. Macaulay wrote of Halifax (*the Trimmer*): 'What distinguishes him from all other English statesmen is this, that through a long life and through frequent and violent revolutions of popular feeling, he almost invariably took that view of the great questions of his time which history has finally adopted. This was a course which contemporaries, heated by passion, might not unnaturally call Laodicean and cowardly, but which deserves a very different name from the later justice of posterity. Hating to ally himself with a party lest it should injure the precious things it declared itself created to preserve, he stands a lonely figure amid the noisy brutal violence of his time.'

This verdict upon the most distinguished figure in the English Revolution is a just comment upon Erasmus. Protestantism to-day is nearer to Erasmus than Luther. Take the questions of Internationalism, Toleration, Education, Peace, the balance between Tradition and Experiment, Biblical Criticism, Justification by Faith, Free Will—it is not too much to say that in all these issues, modern thought has come round toward the side of Erasmus. The one great dogma common to all the sixteenth-century reformers was Predestination—the denial of human free-will. Erasmus opposed Luther's fatalism from the first; we may say that Wesley completed the overthrow of this one-sided Augus-



tinianism. It is worth while to remember that Wesley is perhaps the only first-rate religious reformer who has not been a fatalist. Those who charge him with lack of originality might consider that his theological significance lies chiefly in the fact that he combined the Erasmian doctrine of human free-will and responsibility with the most passionate missionary zeal.

Erasmus died in July, 1536. Everything he had longed for and worked for seemed to be wrecked irretrievably. The peoples of Europe were in a frenzy, wearing either the uniform of Luther or of the Pope. Theologians joined in the fray and hurled insult and invective at each other's heads. Art, scholarship, science, could not flourish on that blood-drenched soil. Gone were the hopes of peace and a supra-national European community. Latin became a dead language. The new world of Luther's German, Cranmer's English, Calvin's French, had taken its place. Nationalism was triumphant. For good or ill the unity of Christendom was shattered. Erasmus's last letter is signed *Eras. Rot. aegra manu*. He was glad to die. He had lost Warham, Fisher and most of all, More. In More's death he himself had really died.

His place in history is that of a supreme Reconciler. He would have subscribed to Pascal's far-reaching dictum: 'There are two excesses, to exalt nature and to condemn it.' We may say Erasmus's key word was 'and'; Luther's was 'either—or.' In his life-long quest after balance and comprehension, Erasmus indicates the unity of Past and Present, Medieval and Modern, Christianity and Classical Antiquity, Faith and Works, God's initiative and man's free-will. His career seemed to close in defeat. But being one of those teachers who outrun their generation in thought, the Future was on his side. His work of promoting the transfusion of humanist culture into religion bore fruit, especially in England. Lord Acton considered that the best part of the English Church in the earlier half of the sixteenth century consisted of the followers of Erasmus.

The Erasmian temper is reflected in the comprehensive wisdom of Hooker and in the piety and philosophy of Hales and Falkland, of Whichcote and John Smith, of Henry More and Jeremy Taylor. In our own time, Westcott and Church, Creighton and Inge, William Temple and A. E. Taylor all pay homage to the scholar-reformer of Rotterdam.

England was a crucial influence in Erasmus's career. And it is in England that his spirit has chiefly found its home. In Church and State we have held to the *via media*, eschewing the wasteful violence of revolution. Our motto is Erasmus's: 'Of two evils, choose neither.' Neither in politics nor religion are we bewitched by Bolshevism. The method of the clean sweep leaves us cold; so we have carried more of our national past into the present than any other nation in Europe.

Such continuity in change was the ideal of Erasmus. He left England, but his spirit remained with us. It is entirely fitting that in the revival of Erasmian studies, the standard-bearer should have been an Englishman.

F. BROMPTON HARVEY.



## THE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM AND OF AUTHORITY

### I

THE juxtaposition of these two terms—Freedom and Authority—suggests, as it is meant, I presume, to suggest, that in life, as we know it and live it, there is often a collision between these two principles. Without for the moment seeking to define or to elucidate these principles, or to say what we mean by the three highly ambiguous terms employed, I think it is obvious to us all that our life is a state of continual tension between ‘freedom’ and ‘authority.’ We were not very long in this world before we began the long process of being educated to this discovery. It was by no volition of our own that we were born into the world: and the same can be said of our fathers and of our fathers’ fathers. Here, at once, we are subject to the ‘principle of authority.’ Having arrived in this ‘vale of soul making,’ we discovered that, if we were called to the making of a soul, what we were able to make had been, in part at least, settled before we appeared. For example, the kind of body in which and through which we should have to live was not of our choosing. Likewise, the kind of world in which we should have to live was *there*, irrespective of any ‘free’ act or thought of our own. There was the ‘authority’ of an objective universe which we *had* to accept. If, like Carlyle’s interlocutor, we should ever be driven to say, by the recognition of the futility of our rebellions, that ‘we have decided to *accept* the universe,’ the retort will come quick and sharp: ‘You’d better!’ Which means, I take it, that the ‘principle of authority’ is inherent in the fact that each of us is born into a universe which is not of his own making, and that the wise man is he who recognizes the limits so imposed upon his own ‘freedom.’ And by the ‘authority’ of the universe I do not mean simply the *material* universe, which by its

'materiality' and its 'laws' inhibits our activities in manifold ways—forbidding us, for example, to walk through a closed door, to live in the sea, to visit the Pleiades, to be in two places at one and the same time, or to live to be a thousand years of age. I mean, also, that there is a universe of mental, moral and spiritual culture into which we are born, a universe which varies with our parents, our parish, our county, or our country. No one of us, for example, had anything to do with the fact that our parents were religious or irreligious, wealthy or poor, lettered or unlettered. No member of the race had anything to do with the fact that his native language was English, or French, or German, or Russian, or Chinese or Bantu—with the several and divergent cultures of which these languages were the vehicle or the medium. 'Authority' was all about us when we arrived on this planet.

But, at the same time, there is a 'freedom' within, which is ever in collision with this 'authority' that is without. The primal fount of this freedom is in our own *consciousness*, and *self-consciousness*. We are always *trying* to do things, and not until we find out that there are things it is no use *trying* to do, do we cease to try to do them. It is by our own trials that we learn what are the limits imposed upon us by the 'authority' of the material universe. The baby *tries*, for example, to seize the milk bottle that is a yard away—and so discovers the conditioning factor of space; tries to seize the flame, and so learns to fear the fire; tries to crawl down the stairs, and by rolling to the bottom learns the force of gravity. Without consciousness, we should *try* to do nothing, and neither learn what we *can* do nor what we *cannot* do. It is by virtue of our *consciousness* that we cease to be automata at the mercy of the inexorable authority of an external universe. Further, as consciousness develops we become aware of the authority of *tradition*, and are thenceforth engaged with the problem of relating our own acts and beliefs with the customs and beliefs transmitted to us by the past of the society in which we happened to be born. We find

that people about us are accustomed to *act* in a certain way, and to *believe* in a certain way. The problem for every man is whether he himself will act as others act, and believe as others believe. For by virtue of his consciousness he becomes aware that he cannot escape a sense of personal responsibility for his acts and for his beliefs, however firmly the customs and beliefs of his society are pressed, or imposed, upon him. At first he conforms unthinkingly to a routine of customary acts and beliefs; but unless, animal-like, he becomes drugged to mere acquiescence in the habitual, he awakes to the consciousness that his acts must be his own or they are not *acts*, and his beliefs his own or they are not *beliefs*.

Thus begins the tension of which every rational and moral being is conscious—and often increasingly conscious—as he journeys through life. On the one hand, he inherits from the society in which he happens to be born a code of rules for his behaviour and a body of doctrines for his belief. On the other hand, he comes to recognize that he is only a rational and moral being as behaviour becomes transmuted into personal acts, and doctrines into personal beliefs. The tension arises in the course of this transmutation. 'Shall I act as my society bids me to act,' one is compelled frequently to ask oneself. 'Shall I believe what my society tells me to believe,' becomes an insistent question.

It is hardly necessary for me to illustrate the kind of tension which thus results. As far as my attitude to the State is concerned the problem is one of *conduct*. The *laws* of a State are the organized embodiments of the judgements of the majority as to what the members of the State should do or not do. With the greater part of these laws every right-thinking individual will find himself in personal agreement. He will recognize that ordered and orderly communal life is only possible on the basis of such 'laws.' No one in a modern State can be allowed to be a 'law' unto himself. So, if he wishes to take his neighbour's goods, or if he wishes

to refuse to pay his State's taxes, or if he wishes to get rid of his neighbour by shooting him or to injure his good name by 'libelling' him, or even if he wishes merely to rid the State of his own presence by poisoning himself—in each case the State will do its utmost to see that these wishes are not put into operation; or, if they have been put into operation, that, where possible, an appropriate 'penalty' is imposed. From all this, as I say, few intelligent and moral men will wish to dissent. But there may be certain 'laws' which seem to the individual to be unjust, or—in other cases—contrary to the dictates of his own 'conscience.' It seemed unjust, for example, to many women that their sex should deprive them of a vote, as it seemed unjust, in former generations, that so many *men* should be deprived of a vote. What must the individual do who thinks that certain laws are unjust? Is he ever justified in breaking existing laws in order to amend them, seeking thereby to register an effective protest? Or must he only act so as to register his protest within the existing system of law, leaving the amendment of these laws to the educated sense of justice of the community? Or, take cases of 'conscience'—though, perhaps, these are hardly to be distinguished from cases of 'injustice.' If the State's law is that every citizen shall fight against the conscripted members of another State, what should the individual do who holds it wrong under any circumstances to kill a man? The State, clearly, is not concerned with the individual's belief: it is only concerned when his belief leads him into an act of disobedience to its own law. And the individual has to decide whether he will disobey the law of the State or the law of his own belief or conviction. Confronted by this opposition, the individual may be led to reconsider his original belief, and so to conform to the law of the State: or he may hold to his original belief, and so become what we are accustomed to call a 'conscientious objector.'

But it is in regard to *religious beliefs* that the inner tension between 'authority' and 'freedom' becomes most acute.

This is so because in this realm the individual is confronted with a claim to an *absolute* authority. When there is a conflict between what the State has decreed an individual *must* do, and what he himself thinks he *ought* to do, it is seldom that the issue is obscured by the claim of either side to have an absolute, or 'supernatural,' authority on its side. But in the realm of religion the individual is confronted with an authority which grounds itself, not upon pleas of utility but upon the claim to absolute truth, not upon the accumulated wisdom of the past but upon the direct revelation of God.

I wish to emphasize this point for a few moments, for it is one which is frequently overlooked, or evaded, in discussions on 'authority' in religion. In the positive religions—and supremely in Christianity—we are confronted, not just with a claim to the accumulated wisdom of society but with a claim to what is finally true. It is therefore no argument for 'authority,' as it is conceived in religion, to point out how much everyone owes to the past, how impossible life would be for the individual to-day without the immeasurable heritage of emotions, thoughts and deeds into which he has entered, how limited must be the grasp of even the most talented individual in comparison with the mass of experience handed down to him by tradition. Such facts as these will be acknowledged by men in all walks of life, and assenting to various types of creed and to no type of creed. As I have already declared, there is no human life but is moulded by environmental and hereditary influences. Nor is any individual self-supporting, whether intellectually, morally, or spiritually. It is a fact by no means recognized only by those who hold to a religious interpretation of life that 'we are members one of another.' Every thinking man knows this, whatever be his creed: for it is a fact bound up with our human solidarity—dare we say, with our solidarity with the whole created universe? This, shall I say, is the 'authority' of inescapable fact, and means, concisely stated,

that no individual is 'independent.' But in the realm of religion we are confronted, not just with fact, but with ultimate *interpretation* of fact. And since that is so, the real question is not what is popularly called the 'value' of authority in religion, but the question as to what is *true* in religion. Thinking men, as I say, must all recognize the 'value' of what the accumulated experience of the past has transmitted to them, and will not lightly discard modes of conduct and types of belief which have commended themselves to generations of wise and thoughtful men. And if this accumulated wisdom expressed itself in *one* creed and 'authorized' *one* mode of conduct, most men to-day would be conformists. But the facts are not like that. Wise men have differed: so that our heritage is a diversity of beliefs and a diversity of customs. Thus, however humbly we may acknowledge that wise men have lived before ourselves, however docile we may wish to be before tradition, we cannot escape confronting the issue of *truth*.

## II

From this discussion it will, I think, be clear that the term 'authority' is used in various senses; and before we can intelligently discuss 'the principle of authority' we must make clear in what sense we use the term. We may mean by 'authority' the *power to enforce obedience*. In this sense the State exercises 'authority' over its subjects: it seeks to compel them to conform to its 'laws.' This 'authority' is exercised in the realm of *conduct*, and not in the realm of *belief*: for, as I have said, the 'authority' of the State is not concerned with enforcing religious or philosophical beliefs on its subjects, but only with ensuring outward conformity to its enactments. A State, of course, may seek to *influence* the beliefs of its members. Every State seeks to do this, through the curricula of its schools, or through the books it permits to be published, and so on. Such endeavour, in the case of democratic States, is, of course, subject to the



control of the people themselves, acting through their elected representatives. But in the case of dictatorship régimes—such as we see in Russia, Italy and Germany—this endeavour to influence the beliefs of the members of the State is—besides being initiated and controlled by a specific policy of the few—much more definite in its intention, and much more extensive in its range. Nevertheless, we have clearly to distinguish the endeavour to *influence* belief and the claim to *decide* belief. For no State, as such, as far as I know, makes any *claim* to be in possession of the *ultimate truth* of things. Its leaders—as in Russia—may believe that the doctrines associated with religion are detrimental to, or subversive of, their policies; and they may, therefore, seek to ensure, as far as in them lies, that the coming generations shall be sceptical of the ultimate beliefs taught by the Church. Yet this endeavour is inspired by a negative claim, not by a positive claim: that is, it is not a claim to be in possession of what is finally true, but a claim to deny such a claim when made by the Church. Scepticism is not a 'creed': it is the negation of all creeds. It does not claim to say what is true, but only claims to declare what is not true. And for that reason the endeavours of dictatorship régimes to influence the beliefs of their members are based, not upon *principle*, but upon *policy*—unless we say that 'policy' is a 'principle,' which I regard as a contradiction in terms. They are guided by a knowledge of *psychology*, not by a conviction as to *truth*. They seek to achieve their aims by the methods of mass-propaganda, that is, by manipulating knowledge and exploiting passion; instead of by teaching, which is the method of free discussion and rational inquiry.

Thus, as long as we are thinking of 'authority' as either *the power to enforce obedience* or *the power to influence belief*, we are concerned with pragmatic or utilitarian considerations, and not with the ultimate consideration of *truth*. For, clearly, the *power* to enforce obedience may bear little or no relation to the *right* to enforce obedience, and the *power* to influence



beliefs may be in inverse ratio to the *truth* of the beliefs instilled. A bully may exercise 'authority,' in the relative or pragmatic sense, while he may be completely devoid of Authority, in the final sense. He may, for example, compel his child to steal—thus exercising his 'authority' over him, and at the same time revealing that he has no authority to exercise. Or—to use another illustration—a preacher or an orator may possess that semi-hypnotic power which enables him to sway the minds of people, irrespective of the truth of the ideas which he expresses. The exploitation of the frailties of the human mind, let us remember, is not confined to dictators. Whoever puts 'policy' before 'principle,' or 'success' before 'truth,' is liable to fall before this most insidious of all temptations—the exploitation, or coercion, of human minds. Such exploitation is based upon the idea that 'authority'—as the power to enforce obedience or to influence belief—is in and by itself a sound principle. The truth is, it is not a *principle* at all, but the negation of all principle. An 'unprincipled' man is a man who acts on the belief that he is justified in doing whatever will put his fellows under his 'authority': such a use of the epithet 'unprincipled' thus makes it clear that there is no 'principle' in 'authority,' conceived in the pragmatic or utilitarian sense. It is as much a negation of all principle as the maxim that 'might is right.' Such a maxim is, I know, often accepted as a *governing law of conduct*, and if you like to call it a 'principle' you may. But it is not a 'principle' in the sense in which we speak of a 'man of principle.' A man of principle is one whose acts are governed by an absolute called 'right,' and whose beliefs are decided by an absolute called 'truth.' His actions can never be decided by such a maxim as 'my country, right or wrong.' He will neither further, nor will he himself acknowledge, the idea that a course of action is right because it has might on its side, that a 'doctrine' is true because it has a majority behind it. He will not, of course, maintain that a course of action is necessarily wrong because

it is enjoined upon him by the sanctions of human 'authority,' or that a doctrine is necessarily untrue because it has behind it the views of the majority: such a mentality is not guided by 'principle,' but by what we call 'cussedness'—it is the 'agin the government' mentality. Nevertheless, he will recognize that every claim to our obedience, or every claim to decide our belief, requires to be *tested*. That is, all external 'authorities' must be subjected to the Authority of Right and Truth.

It is, thus, clear that our final concern must be with what is *right* and *true*. Our concern is not with 'authorities' which, *in point of fact*, are able to secure the obedience of a group of people, or to command their assent to doctrinal propositions. If that were our whole or chief concern, all we could do would be to acquiesce, sceptically, or indifferently in the many conflicting 'authorities' at present existing in the world. For there are as many 'authorities' for conduct in a State as there are States; as there are as many 'authorities' for religious belief as there are organized or positive religions. As far as the realm of religious belief is concerned, the *Vedas* are, in point of fact, the 'authority' for scores of millions of Hindus; the *Koran* for the majority of Muhammadans; the *Bible* for a great section of Christendom; and the *Bible* plus the *Church* for another great section of Christendom. If, therefore, anyone thinks of 'authority' in religion merely in terms of *factual dominion*, or grounds his arguments for 'authority' on utilitarian pleas, he has evaded the real question at issue. I have read many discussions on the 'value' of 'authority' in Christianity which might, with incidental differences, have been written by a Hindu or Muhammadan apologist. For their essential plea was the solidarity of a society, and the need for the individual to accept or bow before the judgements of the majority. This is a plea based on what we may call *brute fact*, and has nothing to do with the real question—namely, what is *right* and *true*. The real question has not to do with 'authorities' but with

Authority: with Authority, that is, in the sense in which Bishop Butler used the word in his famous sentence about conscience: 'Had it strength as it has right, had it power as it has manifest "authority," it would absolutely govern the world.'

### III

What, then, is right and true? We come at last to the issue confronting us as religious men. This question, '*What is right and true?*' necessarily goes with this other question, '*How do we know that anything is right and true?*' I wish to emphasize this for a moment or two.

It is clear that the notions of 'right' and 'truth' arose in the first place in specific human minds. They did not descend ready-made from the sky: they arose by a long process of development, a process which it is obviously impossible for us to-day to trace. But however mysteriously these two notions developed, at least they were developments *within human consciousness*. Their *source* or *ground* may be—as men of theistic faith believe—the mind and purpose of God: but their *seat*, or sphere of manifestation, could only be the consciousness of specific men. This means that the only 'authority' for any assertion as to what is right or true is the consciousness of men who have lived in the past or who are living now. This may seem to be a perfectly trite and self-obvious assertion. It seems to me, however, that it is one usually missed, or clouded over by ambiguous argumentation, in apologetic pleas for an external authority in religion.

For example, it may be said, by some, that a *book* is the external authority in religion; or, by others, that a *book* plus what are regarded as *interpretative additions* (such as *dogmas*, or *ex cathedra* papal utterances) is the external authority in religion. But both the *book* and the interpretative additions represented by *tradition* are but the mental, moral and spiritual consciousness of men expressed or externa-

lized in language. Both book and tradition *represent* the consciousness of specific men. To say, therefore, that a book or a tradition is an external authority in religion—an authority for faith and morals—is a disguised way of saying that the mental, moral and spiritual consciousness of a specific body of men is taken as 'authoritative.' Every book is the record of the inner experience of some person or persons. What we call tradition—whether it be in the form of defined dogmas or in the form of undefined cult or ritual—is likewise a record of inner experience.

If any one, then, says that the Bible is 'the seat of authority' in religion, or that the Church as the interpreter of the Bible is 'the seat of authority,' what he really is saying—if he will think about what he is saying—is that to him the Bible is the record of human experiences which were *right* and *true*, or that a certain society called the Church has rightly and truly interpreted this record. In both cases the 'seat of authority' is not the record, but the experiences of which it is a record.

Now *why* should these records of experience—these 'seats of authority'—ever have been taken as right and true? The answer obviously is: because they *seemed so*, or *commended themselves*, to other men. That is, the 'seat of authority' itself is the consciousness of certain men: as, likewise, the setting up of such consciousness as 'authoritative' is a fact of the consciousness of certain other men. Any declaration—whether by prophet, philosopher, scientist or poet—of what is right and true is a declaration of what the prophet, philosopher, scientist or poet has come to the conclusion, whether by insight or reflection or observation, is right and true. And likewise, any declaration on the part of other men that what the aforesaid prophet, philosopher, scientist or poet, have recorded is right and true, is itself the conclusion of the intuition, the reflection, the observation, the verification of these other men. The Bible was written out of the religious experience of men. Likewise, the canon of Scripture

was decided by the religious experience of other men. Likewise again, the dogmatic declarations of the Church were reached as a result of the mental, moral and spiritual experiences of men. What are called external 'seats of authority' have always had their original 'seat' in human consciousness. That is, what is now regarded as 'external' was always in the first place 'internal.' It is as impossible for what are now called 'seats of authority' to have arisen outside human consciousness as it is for what we call 'knowledge' to have so arisen. When men choose to say that a book, or certain interpretations of a book, is a 'seat of authority' for them, all they are saying is that they have decided, on various grounds, to accept as right and true the insights, reflections or beliefs of those who created them. And the question remains, *Why*, or on what grounds, they have so decided.

Now, clearly, it is no real answer to this question to say that the decision is reached in mere obedience to a claim peremptorily made. I know, of course, that many people in all walks of life do and believe what they happen to be told, or what they happen to read in the latest book. But does any thoughtful man *ground* his belief on mere obedience to the dictation of someone else, or even of a large body of men? A man may say he does; but in point of fact he does not. Let me illustrate. A man says that he believes that light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles a second on the sole ground that the astronomical physicist says so. Now it is true that comparatively few men have personally made the necessary observations, experiments and calculations which lead to this conclusion. But in the last resort they believe the physicist, not on the ground that he says so, but on the ground that they have faith that he has competent knowledge. Their acceptance of this belief is grounded in the faith *that the physical facts are so*. The statement is 'true,' not because the astronomer says so, but because physical reality says so: and this is the real ground of everyone's belief.

So, also, it is in the realm of religious belief. The real ground of our belief in any doctrine the Church may have declared is not obedience to what the Church says: it is our faith that what the Church says is in accord with ultimate reality. People often say that in the realm of religion all they can do is to accept the 'authority of experts.' But, whoever should happen to be the 'expert' you consult, you will not find that *he* grounds *his* statements on the mere fact of his own assertion: he will try to give you a coherent statement for his own belief, a statement which will no doubt include the testimony of men whom he himself regards as 'experts,' but which will give *reasons* for his acceptance of their testimony. And though he might verbally repudiate the dictum of Rousseau's *Vicar of Savoy* he would be unable to escape its truth: 'il me faut des raisons pour soumettre ma raison.'

The truth is, that the so-called 'right of private judgement'—or what we might call 'the principle of personal responsibility for belief'—is by no means simply a 'Protestant' principle. It is a principle inherent in the fact of human consciousness. You are all, no doubt, familiar with the amusing story of the Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic who were discussing the doctrines they held in common. In no single doctrine it seemed, did they differ. 'The fundamental difference between us lies here,' said the Roman Catholic to the Anglo-Catholic; 'you believe these doctrines for the entirely irrelevant reason that you personally think them to be true.' Now, I am not concerned to deny that the Roman Church *in point of practice* stands, not for *Credo*, but for *Impero*: or, stated otherwise, that the sin of all sins, the heresy of all heresies, to her is *disobedience*. Nevertheless, not even the Roman Catholic thinker will ground the truth of his dogmas on the mere fact of their assertion. He may have a better knowledge of the frailties of the human mind than his friend, and, therefore, may declare to the faithful: Yours 'not to reason why,' but merely to accept what you are told. But a knowledge



of the workings of the frail human mind is not a *ground of belief*. The only ground for his belief, as for the Protestant's belief, is either his personal conviction or his personal faith that these doctrines are in accord with the facts of nature and of history as known within human consciousness.

In this sense, what we may call 'the principle of freedom' is inherent in personality. It can no more be escaped than a man can escape himself. Occasionally we hear of intelligent men, brought up in the Protestant conception of faith and of life, joining the Roman Church, because, as they say, they have decided to accept a 'religion of authority.' They have failed to see that the very act of *accepting* a 'religion of authority' is an assertion of the principle of freedom. It is not for me to conduct a psychological scrutiny into the mental history of such men: though it is clear that before they decided to take this step they were perplexed, often tortured, by uncertainties and even positive doubts. Having reached a decision to 'leave all to the Church,' they *may* find a certain respite *from* the gnawing perplexities of the mind, a respite which, as is well known, is often but temporary. I leave, however, such psychological inquiries. My point is that *the very decision* on their part to accept what they are told, is a repudiation of the 'principle of authority,' as it is claimed by the Roman Church. The very *act of obeying* the dictates of an 'external authority' is an assertion that no such 'authority' is a basis of truth.

The truth is, there is no such '*principle* of authority.' There is only *one* principle of Authority: it is the principle of the recognition by man of the Authority of Truth. The only truly *free* man is he who accepts this principle. Nothing is *true* because it is *declared*—whether by an individual or by a large body of individuals—to be true. It is only *true* if it is a declaration which corresponds with reality: if, in other words, it is a statement about things *as they are*. This, as we all recognize, is the mark of the really *truth-loving* man. He is the man who wishes to see things *as they are*.



He is the man who can never uncritically *equate* 'things as they are' with 'things as they are declared to be.' He believes that there is such a thing as the *truth about things*. For that reason, those who think of Authority in terms of 'seats of authority' are really sceptics at bottom.

What is, as I think, *wrongly* called the 'principle' of authority, is just a 'policy,' or a matter of propaedeutics. The function of all institutions is pedagogic, not 'authoritarian' in the sense claimed by any so-called 'infallible' dogma. Schools, Societies, Universities exist for the transmission of the heritages of the past: and also—let me add—for the increase of the heritages to be transmitted to the future. Most institutions find it difficult to remember the latter of these two functions. The inertia of institutions is proverbial. Lowell expressed this indisputable fact of history when he said: 'He who is firmly seated in authority soon learns to think security, and not progress, the highest lesson of statecraft.' We may regard the 'Jerusalem that killeth the prophets' as but a symbol of the stifling quality of all institutions. They become primarily concerned with self-preservation. They tend to become the organized embodiment of the 'self-love' which is the root of most of humanity's troubles. Even institutions like modern universities—based as they are on the principle of freedom—find it hard to remember that 'he that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life shall find it.' They come to think of themselves as ends, not as means to an end. How, alas, can it be otherwise when the majority of men are as they are? No institution can ever be better than the men who compose it. The prophets in every age are few.

If once it can be seen that all institutions have a pedagogic and not an 'authoritarian' function, we are in sight of the resolution of the tension between 'freedom' and 'authorities.' These 'authorities' must see that they were created in the first place by 'freedom.' They only came to exist because

there was knowledge, wisdom, insight to be transmitted: and this knowledge, wisdom, insight had its origin within the consciousness inherent in personality. What, therefore, we call 'authorities' must always be subject to the principle of freedom which has created them. They exist for it, not it for them. It is the very principle enunciated by Jesus: 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath,' so that 'the Son of man,' or man in his essential being, is always 'lord of the Sabbath.' In this saying Jesus but gave a specific illustration of the truth expressed in philosophic language by Hoffding: 'The principle of authority is subject to the principle of personality: authority can never be an end, only a means to an end.'

And this 'principle of personality,' as the same philosopher said, 'does not exclude examples and teachers.' Indeed, by the very constitution of life in its solidarity, it *demands* them. But 'teachers' are not 'impositors.' The true function of the teacher is to elicit, or inspire, personal insight in his pupils. A *pseudo*-teacher will regard *himself* as an authority, or, more frequently, will regard other people as his authorities. A *true* teacher has penetrated all these illusions, and delusions; recognizing that there is but one Authority—the Authority of objective reality evidencing itself within the human consciousness as Truth. This was stated otherwise by the late Professor Sorley when he said: 'The authority assigned to persons or institutions or to the individual conscience is a derivative authority, dependent on the values which they declare or represent.'

This paper, I need hardly say, has not been written as an apologetic for Christianity. It is not within the scope of my theme to discuss what are the 'truths' of our Christian religion. I have been concerned with *principles*, not with *doctrines*. Even so, there is inherent in what I have tried to say a point of view from which I would approach that final question. What is True can only be known to be true within human consciousness. This means, in the last resort, that

Truth must be self-evidencing. As preachers we declare what we have found within the depths of our own experience and conviction to be true. But when we preach, we do not expect people to see, or to believe, just because we say so. We have faith in Truth, not just, or even, in our own vision of it. We see through a glass darkly; and we do not wish our own imperfect visions to be mistaken for Reality. We do not wish our people to take any word of ours as authoritative: we seek to declare a Reality partly made known to us, but ever transcending us—the Reality of God. And our faith in Truth is grounded in the conviction that the Reality of God is self-evidencing within the depths of the enlightened and dedicated human soul. The *Verbum Dei* is known to be such by the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti*. When the people said of Jesus that ‘He spake *with authority*, and not as the scribes,’ what they meant, I take it, was that here was one whose teaching was not only convinced but convincing—that is, it had inherent in it the self-evidencing stamp of Truth. That in our highest human consciousness we have correspondence with Reality is the ultimate faith of man. For it is on this faith that there is built every edifice of Science, of Philosophy, and of Religion.

C. J. WRIGHT.

## JOHN DAVIDSON AND THE POETRY OF THE 'NINETIES

**I**T seemed as though a malign fate pursued the poets of the 'nineties. Mr. W. B. Yeats (he and Mr. Arthur Symonds are almost the only survivors of the group) referred to them as 'the tragic circle.' And the epithet was justified. Even those that met with no violent end fell victims either to their own excesses in alcohol and drugs or to premature decline. Everyone is familiar with Wilde's untimely passing at the age of forty-four. After years of chronic poverty and ill-health, Francis Thompson died of consumption at forty-seven. The author of the greatest religious poem of his age was at one time glad to hold horses' heads for a few coppers! Lionel Johnson might have become a distinguished man of letters, but a fall in Fleet Street led to his death when he was thirty-five. Ernest Dowson, a man of remarkable talent, was both a consumptive and a dipsomaniac. His might easily have been a brilliant career, but he was dead at thirty-three. W. E. Henley's mortal span was longer than that of his fellows, but all his life he suffered from tubercular disease, and he died at fifty-four. John Davidson was fifty-two when he disappeared under mysterious circumstances. In all probability he took his own life—the facts leave little room to suppose otherwise. Strange that these men, who with all their failings had such zest for the finer things of life and such talent for expressing that zest, should pass thus early away, while we the ungifted herd of groundlings plod on to old age.

How comes it in literature that the writing of the man strong in body is so often conventional, tepid and innocuous, while that of his physically weaker brother is no less often vigorous and provocative? Our friends the psychologists would doubtless refer the matter to a chain of complexes. They would explain how the consciousness of physical inferiority reacts upon and quickens the consciousness of mental

superiority. They would demonstrate how his instincts urge the man not physically well-equipped to deflect his current of being from activities where he compares unfavourably with his fellows to those in which he excels them. Hence, they would argue, the phenomenon of an output of powerful intellectual work not at all in keeping with the frail body that produced it. Finally (they would say) if we dissect this mental thrust, we shall find its essence to be but the counterpart of that pugnacity which in the animal kingdom so often makes its smaller kinds more to be feared than their larger neighbours.

This axiom holds true when applied to the poets of the 'nineties. Despite their bodily ills and their generally low standard of health, theirs was a robust muse. Henley, physically the greatest sufferer of them all, was a trenchant versifier. So was Davidson. He has the same bold address. He, too, shouts defiance from a lonely peak. He came to recognition by a hard road. In the travelling of it he passed many obstacles, and the struggle drew out to the full those fighting qualities which were so essentially a part of him.

Lewis Hind, who knew Davidson well, thus describes him:

'He was not in the least like the traditional figure of a poet: he was a short stocky man, full of ideas, very opinionated, chronically angry with the world for not taking him at his own valuation, yet a very pleasant companion.'

John Davidson was born in Renfrewshire in 1857. When only thirteen he was set to work in a Greenock sugar factory. Later he found employment as a clerk with the town analyst. Next he turned to school-teaching. First a pupil teacher and then a master at various 'academies,' he soon tired of the scholastic life, for in 1883 we find him again sitting at a desk in the office of a Glasgow thread firm. But commerce proving even more irksome to him than schoolmastering, he returned to schoolmastering. There followed a succession of junior posts at various private schools. But he could never really adapt himself to the teaching profession, and he now decided to abandon it. His natural bent was towards authorship, and

either in 1889 or 1890 (the dates given by the authorities are conflicting) he came to London, determined to make his way as a journalist. He had already written five plays for which he had found a publisher at Greenock (they were afterwards re-issued in one volume by Mr. John Lane<sup>1</sup>) and the literary life now claimed him in earnest. I do not suppose that the bookshops now have many inquiries for his *Fleet Street Eclogues*, but when they were fresh from the press in 1893, they created something of a stir. Within twelve months he had followed them up with *Ballads and Songs*. Among them you will find that 'Ballad of a Nun' without which no anthologist of 'nineties poetry would consider his collection complete.

I care not for my broken vow,  
 Though God should come in thunder soon,  
 I am sister to the mountains now,  
 And sister to the sun and moon.

The *Eclogues* had caught the ear of the town. Later he attempted to duplicate their success with a second series. Like most sequels their quality was below that of the originals. The promise of Davidson's opening years was never fulfilled. His earlier work had been rich in thought and powerful in expression. Later it was merely rhetorical. His leaning towards the ornate and the grandiose (always a weakness with him) became more pronounced as he passed to middle age. All his best imaginative writing was done before the close of the 'nineties. He continued working at various literary forms, particularly the dramatic which had always attracted him. *The Theatrocrat* (1905) was the last of a succession of plays, none of which met with more than a lukewarm reception. The public that had hailed him so warmly ten years before turned to fresh idols. In that same year (1905) he issued his *Selected Poems*. A Civil List pension was granted him in 1906. He was living in poverty at Penzance, when on March 23, 1909, he disappeared. His fate was unknown until,

<sup>1</sup> My thanks are due to Messrs John Lane, (The Bodley Head) Ltd., for kind permission to make extracts from certain works published by them.

six months later, his body was recovered from the sea. In a sense, he had lived a tragic life, for he had seen the sun of his own reputation go down, and he died a tragic death.

I sometimes speculate as to what were Davidson's thoughts during those last days at Penzance. Often he must have watched the little steamer leave the wharf for the Scillies—the lost kingdom of Atlantis, the fabled land of Lyonesse. I cannot explain why—probably it is the projection through the subconscious of some drawing seen in childhood—but the half-tropical vegetation in the Morrab Gardens always sets me musing on things Moorish, and on Algiers. Did Davidson so react? Did he also picture the low black galleys of the Algerine corsairs out in Mount's Bay; Elizabethan pikemen hurrying down to meet them; all the scuffle and dust of conflict? The long hill of Market Jew Street, with the solid fort-like building perched sentinel-wise at the top, still keeps a Tudor flavour. One needs no very strong imagination to people it with figures buff-coated and steel-morioned. Did Davidson's spirit look back wistfully at those full-blooded days? Would he not rather have put his hand to a sword under Elizabeth than to a pen under Victoria? His temperament inclines one to think so. But whatever his thoughts, they must have been ill company for him as the end came near—hence why his tragic passing by his own act? It was in truth the act of an Elizabethan. We can but honour the memory of any man who loved the thing we call literature even more than he loved life itself. Davidson was one such.

Time has made it plain that Davidson's appeal comes to us now mainly through his verse. It is therefore not proposed to examine his work in any other department. In passing, one regrets that the *Random Itinerary* is not better known. It is a record of Davidson's wanderings through the English countryside, and contains some beautifully written prose. Rural journeyings, taken after the manner of Hazlitt and Stevenson, were much in the mode of the early 'nineties. Among the explorers of their own land was Richard le



Gallienne; his *Travels in England* is the chronicle of just such another pilgrimage.

Davidson had a poet's relish for simple natural things—bare fells and little wooded hollows; chalk-white cliffs and the lap of running water under the stars. 'A curious kind of buoyant vanity' (again I quote Lewis Hind) gave him a too-flattering opinion of his work. He quite seriously thought that everything he printed would be of permanent worth. In point of fact his writing is unequal. Not that he was lacking in many of the poetic virtues. There went to his make-up certain basic qualities without which no great poetry can be brought into being. His thought was copious and stimulating (though not always logical). He had somewhat more than his share of bardic fire. He wrote few lines that did not spring from emotion deeply and sincerely felt. He had a talent for striking imagery and vivid little bits of description:

Part in wanton sport and part in ire,  
Flights of rain on ruddy foliage rang:  
Woven showers like sheets of silver fire  
Streamed; and all the forest rocked and sang.

But on the debit side. He too often mistook turbulence for strength. He was constantly liable to over-statement and over-emphasis. Much of his writing was rhetoric—sheer rhetoric, that sometimes became so violent as to be almost incoherent. As the years advance, most poets shed the noise and the shouting of their youth. Not so Davidson. This tendency to wordiness—much art with little matter—though always with him, was characteristic of his later rather than of his earlier phase. He had a passion for highly gilded effects. Someone should have repeated to him every morning the tag about beauty unadorned. His work would have been the better for its application.

The stylistic influence of Henley must also be reckoned with. Henley's was a dominating personality. Few came under it that did not trim their early writing in the Henley

mode. True that when they were older, most of them departed from it. But Davidson was one of 'Henley's young men,' and his best work was written while Henley was still the unquestioned literary dictator of his group.

In common with the other men of the 'nineties, Davidson used the traditional verse forms. Such impudences as free verse and consonantal rhyming were yet to come. He had great verbal dexterity. So much so that in watching some particularly clever feat of metrical juggling, one is apt to overlook the thought behind the words. The rather showy trick of internal rhyme, he had to perfection. His poems show many lines of the 'Where argosies have wooed the breeze' order.

But there were occasions (and not infrequent occasions) when the lyrical impulse seized upon him, shook the mannerisms out of him, and forced him to write with naturalness and spontaneity. Then you get the essential Davidson. When this mood was with him, he wrote the only poems that posterity is likely to keep. Among them surely will be 'The Apple Trees,' the charm of which can be conveyed only by quotation in full, which space forbids. There is a surprising modernity in its sentiment and diction; the note is that of the 1930's rather than of the 1890's:

Their mystery none discovers,  
So none can tell—  
Not the most passionate lovers  
Of garth and fell;  
For the silent sunlight weaves  
The orchard spell,  
Bough, bole and root,  
Mysterious, hung with leaves,  
Embossed with fruit . . .  
No jealousy, anger or fashion  
Of strife  
Perturbs in their stations  
The apple trees. Life

Is an effortless passion,  
Fruit, bough and stem  
A beautiful patience  
For them.  
Frost of the harvest-moon  
Changes their sap to wine;  
Ruddy and golden soon  
Their clustered orbs will shine,  
By favour  
Of many a wind,  
Of morn and noon and night,  
Fulfilled from core to rind  
With savour  
Of all delight.

If after reading this poem you do not yourself feel something of the peace, the drowsy contentment of the orchard, your literary soul must be past praying for!

Davidson had all the poet's revulsion against injustice and oppression. He assaulted them (with none too gentle words) whenever he met them. And he hated the grinding of the industrial machine with a bitter hatred. But he never distinguished between the individual and the social order of which the individual was a part. He too closely identified the particular with the general. He lights upon a factory owner, and in that one person he sees embodied all the evils of the factory system. The man was in all likelihood neither a very good nor a very bad employer—he may even have been a model employer. But it mattered not to Davidson. Here was an employer of labour, and *ipso facto* he was without soul and abhorrent. Davidson was in arms against society. But the reform of society is brought no nearer by violences of this kind:

Here each promoter's face,  
Employer's, broker's, owner's, merchant's, mean  
As any eunuch's and as evil, tells  
How souls unsexed by business come to love  
Elaborate torture and the sullen joy  
Of coining men and women into wealth.

These lines are typical of Davidson in his jousting vein. There is power in them. That cannot be gainsaid. But they fail of effect because the language is heightened to the point of absurdity. Most of us have yet to meet a broker whose face is 'mean as any eunuch's and as evil.' Such invective is pointless—noisy and untrue, it merely irritates. Davidson is continually spiking his own guns in this fashion.

The poets of the Tennysonian school wrote in a spiritual key. They looked at the future with a vague indeterminate optimism. But it was still optimism. Davidson and the 'nineties school twisted the wheel of reaction to the opposite pole. They became materialists. The future they saw as barren of hope as the present and as futile as the past. (I speak in general terms; there were, of course, exceptions on either side.) Ernest Dowson was spokesman for them all when with

a Latin terseness he summed up their philosophy in that short poem with the long Latin title:

They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,  
 Love and desire and hate;  
 I think they have no portion in us after  
 We pass the gate.

Davidson was always at cross purposes with his time. He could not well be otherwise, for he was by nature a rebel. But he seems to have lacked any clear idea as to precisely what he rebelled against. And he was still more indefinite as to what (if anything) he would set up after he had pulled down. His ideals were so hazy that they can only be deduced from a series of guesses, which may as likely be wrong as right. He was lord of a surging host of thoughts and ideas that sorely needed drill and discipline. Like all mobs it made the maximum of noise with the minimum of achievement. Its leader was himself uncertain as to where or how he should lead it. Had it been so drilled and disciplined, it might have done great things on some field of poetic action. In the result its energies were frittered away in skirmishes and affairs of outposts. Davidson would have gained from some really hard reading in law or logic or one of the exact sciences while his mind was still in the native stage. It would have clarified his intellect and given it balance and precision. It would have brought order into his chaotic thought. Later he did begin the study of science. But his mental habits had then been formed and he could not alter them.

In his book on the Beardsley period, Mr. Osbert Burdett includes a study of Davidson. It is scholarly, shrewd and just—excellent of its kind. Mr. Burdett considers that Davidson's work was thrown out of balance by his worship of the Elizabethans, and his desire to substitute their spirit for his own. Davidson, he points out, could copy their vices readily enough, but was unable either to assimilate or to reproduce their virtues. He endeavoured to recast himself in the Elizabethan image and failed. Mr. Burdett is utterly

and completely right. His remarks have a general application outside the particular instance to which he limits them. The creative artist (I use the convenient term which Arnold Bennett was never tired of repeating), whatever the medium through which he works, can do his art no greater ill than by attempting to make it the reincarnation of a dead epoch. That way disaster lies. The Elizabethans were children peering with an eager curiosity at a strange new intellectual world. They were completely in tune with their *zeitgeist*, and they spoke and wrote as they did because they were so in tune. Davidson, the sophisticated Victorian, living three centuries after them, might (and did) successfully ape their speech. But he could no more hope to recapture their mental excitements than the adult can hope to recapture the wonder with which as a child he first looked upon the sea. Every age has an outlook peculiarly its own—an outlook that fades with the passing of the age, and cannot afterwards be reproduced. So much is (or should be) obvious. The parable of the old wine and the new bottles is two thousand years old. Yet how often is its point still unheeded?

Davidson's powerful imagination sometimes led him into situations where you would scarcely have expected to find him. Except on this hypothesis I have never been able to fathom how he came to the writing of 'A Runnable Stag.' I can as easily picture Robert Bridges working at the libretto of a comic opera as John Davidson composing verses in glorification of a stag hunt. The very core and nature of the man were alien to the theme. Such a poem might honestly have been written by a full-blooded country squire, with a talent for the pen and the instinct of the hunter in his veins. It might have been written by Wilfred Scawen Blunt. But I cannot think that Davidson really believed in the genuineness of the feelings which he lays bare in these stanzas. I strongly suspect that he deliberately posed his emotions for the writing of them—deliberately posed them at the bidding of his Elizabethan yearnings. But the amazing metrical skill of the piece! The

mingled subtlety and simplicity of its rhythms! Who can fail to be carried away by the swing and the lilt of lines like these:

When the pods went pop on the broom, green broom,  
And apples began to be golden-skin'd,  
We harbour'd a stag in the Priory coomb,  
And we feather'd his trail up-wind, up-wind,  
We feather'd his trail up-wind—

A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,  
A runnable stag, a kingly crop,  
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,  
A stag, a runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup  
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.  
Tally ho! tally ho! and the hunt was up,  
The tufters whipp'd, and the pack laid on,  
The resolute pack laid on.

And the stag of warrant away at last,  
The runnable stag, the same, the same,  
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,  
A stag, a runnable stag.

Davidson was extravagantly over-praised during his lifetime. He was lauded in terms that the cognoscenti usually reserve for a third-rate Caroline playwright. Some of the praise was so fulsome as to be ridiculous. The wine of it must have turned even Davidson's strong Scottish head. Conceive, if you please, so sane a person as Israel Zangwill—Zangwill, author of the drab *Children of the Ghetto*—delivering himself of this bombast:

'John Davidson is a prodigal of every divine gift, pouring out untold treasure from his celestial cornucopia. He will turn you a metaphor as deftly as any Elizabethan dramatist and wields as rich a vocabulary. All these glorious gifts have found vent in the most diverse artistic or inartistic shapes.'

Nor was Zangwill alone in thus bending the knee. The whole air was thick with compliments. As early as 1893 'Q' was something of a critical force. His judgements were already being listened to with respect. And in that year even he had spoken of Davidson as a man from whom great things might certainly be looked for. But 'Q' was then at the age which praises enthusiastically. And if youth has no enthusiasms where are we to look for them?

The reasons for this homage are not far to seek when we remember that it was paid not only to Davidson but to other of his contemporary versifiers. For forty years and more the figure of Tennyson had dominated the English poetic scene. His volumes had acquired an almost scriptural authority. Maiden ladies placed their Tennysons side by side with their prayer-books. Davidson and his circle were in revolt against Tennyson and the traditions of his school. And young rebels will always have an enthusiastic following.

The extraordinary popularity of Tennyson was brought about by the fact that he not only had the ear of the public, but saw so entirely eye to eye with it. No poet ever more completely embodied in his verse the generally held opinions of his day. His orthodoxy was sound as that of a bishop. He was the accredited mouthpiece of the Victorian era. He had but to speak and the Victorians instantly recognized the speech as the expression of their own thoughts.

He had none of that divine discontent which the centuries have agreed in recognizing as the poet's prerogative. Rather had he a divine content. He looked out upon the world from his cloister, and he pronounced it good. 'No man can contemplate the monstrous injustices and inequalities of life and remain entirely happy.' Thus the author of *Post Mortem*, who is physician to the mind as well as to the body. But Tennyson could remain entirely happy. The spectacle of the later Industrial Revolution and all the misery that it connoted passed before his eyes, but he did not see it. Elizabeth Barrett Browning in one short poem came nearer the deeps of life than Tennyson ever came in all his long career.

The inhabitants of a flat country are apt to regard the foot-hills as mountains. Tennyson's position as a poet was due to much the same cause. Mid-nineteenth century poetry was at a low level. You may count its only distinguished practitioners on your fingers. In the time of his birth as in every other circumstance of his life, Tennyson was fortunate.



What place would he hold had he commenced to write in the Twentieth and not in the Nineteenth Century?

The prose *Testaments* that Davidson issued at intervals tell of his intellectual travels stage by stage. They are a sort of spiritual Odyssey. Davidson found that religion could be of no further service to man. It had, he said, outgrown its usefulness; it now stood in the way of progress. So he turned religion out of his mind, and installed science in its place. He began the study of science. But unhappily at this juncture he chanced upon the writings of Nietzsche, by which he was instantly attracted. He also began the study of Nietzsche. He studied both concurrently. No man can serve two masters—much less two such masters as science and Nietzsche. You may remember Gibbon's remark on the Koran: 'that it sometimes crawls in the dust, and is sometimes lost in the clouds.' Nietzsche's curious jumble of doctrine might almost be described in the same terms.

In his later work Davidson set out to interpret the facts of science and the teachings of Nietzsche. Thus he found himself much in the position of a ball-juggler. On the one hand he balanced the cold, exact findings of material science; on the other the hot gospel of a strange prophet—some would say of a mad prophet. The distinction need not concern us. Nietzsche may or may not have been mad. In any event the psychologists now agree that the line between genius and madness is beyond determination. Davidson had a nimble, a very nimble, mind. He needed all its agility to carry him through these mental gymnastics.

One of Davidson's *Testaments* is addressed to the House of Lords, in which august body he discerned a lack of culture. He found that culture among the aristocracy of Britain had been and was still declining. He ascribed this decline to the intellectual sleeping sickness which he held was induced by Christianity. Precisely by what chain of reasoning Davidson satisfied himself that the barons who fought under de Montfort or who fell in the Wars of the Roses were superior in

culture to their successors under Victoria, is not clear. And as to the paralysing effect of Christianity on culture, the historians may have misinformed me, but they positively gave me to understand that though the Church may on occasion have attempted to blow out the torch of science, she was yet sedulous in keeping the lamp of learning alight. Certainly it was so in the Dark and in the Middle Ages. Even the frankly atheistic historian concedes as much.

Mr. J. M. Kennedy has made a close study of Davidson's work. He summarizes his conclusions in his admirable book on *English Literature—1880-1905*. His estimate of Davidson as a poet is, I think, over-high. But when he deals with the influence of Nietzsche on Davidson, he is particularly illuminating and helpful. He points out that Davidson's attacks on Christianity plainly derive from Nietzsche. And Nietzsche's attacks were directed against the Protestant rather than the Catholic branch. Mr. Kennedy argues that Davidson altogether overlooked the wide gulf between the two in matters of organization and discipline, and so turned his artillery on both indiscriminately. A theory that is very likely true.

Verse is an excellent medium of expression. But it has its limitations. It is clearly not suitable for the exposition of science. Davidson, poring over physics or chemistry, hailed with delight each discovery of science as it came to his notice. He hastened to communicate both the discoveries and his delight to an apathetic world. But unluckily he chose verse as his means of communication. I do not say that the compositions which resulted are unintelligible. But I do put forward this suggestion. If any examiner in English Literature is looking for a subject with which to round off his question paper, let him ask his examinees to paraphrase one of Davidson's science poems. He will then soon discover the witless among his flock.

There is an autumn sadness in contemplating these poets of the 'nineties. They are so near to us in point of time

(some of them are still in the flesh) and yet in spirit so immeasurably far away. They had broken with the Tennysonian tradition, and they must be credited with bringing about a minor poetic renaissance. All had a high degree of technical skill—a wonderful sense of the magic and the melody of words. This concentration on form was indeed their undoing. Manner became so much more important than matter. In labouring so hard to reach artistic perfection, they lost touch with reality. Theirs was not the art that conceals art—rather was it the art that exhibits itself, and is proud of the exhibition. How often does one find oneself reading them for the sound and not for the sense?

The Georgians were already working at forms and in a mode different from theirs when there came the thunder-clap of the War. And immediately the breach that had been opening between the men of the 'nineties and their successors began suddenly to widen. In a few years it was impassable. No war-poet can even be conceived as employing the dainty artifice of Wilde or Austin Dobson. Men face to face with tragedy unthinkingly drop all stylistic tricks.

It has been wisely remarked that as no disparagement attaches to the title of Minor Prophet, why should that of minor poet be held in contempt? Why, indeed? Davidson was certainly a minor poet. (This despite the fact that James Elroy Flecker found him to have written 'the best blank verse since Milton.') By what will he be remembered? Not, I think, by *Scaramouch in Naxos: A Pantomime*. Still less by *Bruce: A Chronicle Play*. No one but the specialist can now tell you even the titles of his novels, much less what they are about. Alike in plan and execution, the *Fleet-street Eclogues* appear somewhat stilted and artificial to a twentieth-century taste. We now demand realism even in our bucolics. Yet if once you reconcile yourself to the idea that the journalists in the *Eclogues* make no pretence at behaving like real journalists, but are, as it were, a specially created pastoral variety, you will find considerable charm in the series.

It is by his lyrical poetry that Davidson will live. Some of his shorter pieces already have a firm place in the anthologies. There is no reason why they should lose it. The elect will curl their fine nostrils at the mere mention of an anthology. They have always done so, and they always will do so. But why this derision? The poems in the school anthology eat themselves into the child's mental fibre. They go down the ages. Their influence is permanent. Even as I write, some embryo Shelley or Keats may be getting his first poetic thrill from the wonderful music (for it is wonderful music) of such little masterpieces as 'In Romney Marsh' or 'A Cinque Port.' Surely it is better to be remembered by a few simple things that have become part of the national consciousness than by a chain of ponderous tomes, read only by the few, and of which the many have never even heard.

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## CHAITANYA : A HINDU EVANGELIST

THE cult of Vishnu has a long history in India, testifying from the first to the need of man for a personal God. In some parts the cult encourages the worship of all or several of the incarnations of Vishnu, the chief of whom is Krishna. In Bengal, the birthplace of Chaitanya, the worship of Krishna was early established, and along with it the worship also of Rādhā, the cowherd heroine of Krishna's amours in Brindaban. Some of the earliest and greatest of the poets in Bengal made the description of these amours the theme of their songs, and were themselves Vaishnavas. These songs, spiritually interpreted, formed the basis of Chaitanya's religious experience, and he was to become the greatest figure in the history of Vaishnavism in Bengal; for though he was not its founder, it was he who made it a living force in the religious life of the people.

He was born in the town of Navadwip, on the banks of the Ganges, in 1486. Navadwip was at that time an important place, the headquarters of a civil government, and noted for its Sanskrit learning. Scholars from many parts of India were attracted to its 'tōls,' or Sanskrit schools.

To-day its chief title to fame is that it was the birthplace of Chaitanya, and it is a place of pilgrimage for all devout Vaishnavas. In his early life he gave little indication of his future power as a religious leader. He was a brilliant student, and at an early age started a Sanskrit school of his own; in general he seems to have been a high-spirited youth, with brilliant gifts, content to excel in the secular scholarship of the day, and with a scornful attitude towards personal religion. Other influences were, however, at work below the surface. He lived in a Brahmin home of deep piety, and wandering 'sādhus' were frequent guests. In addition, his elder brother left the home and took the vows of a 'sannyāsi,' never to be heard of again. The great change in his own

life came at about the age of twenty-three. Unfortunately, we have few data from which to reconstruct his state of mind. It was, however, a deeply emotional experience, and it changed him for life. He had gone to Gaya, for many centuries a centre of Buddhist pilgrimage, a place, too, where pilgrims are shown the footprint of Vishnu, in order to perform the 'shrāddha' ceremonies for his dead father. This is a ceremonial act which does not necessarily presuppose an inward spiritual urge, but the nature of his errand and the devotional atmosphere in which he found himself combined to work the change. He entered the temple, we are told, and 'When he heard from the mouth of the Brahmins the glory of the footprint, the Master became possessed with love and bliss. Floods of tears flowed from his two lotus eyes. His hair stood on end and he trembled at the sight of the footprint. The Master, Gourchandra (another name for Chaitanya) for the good fortune of the whole universe, began his manifestations of love and devotion. Incessant floods flowed from the Master's eyes. The Brahmins present there saw this most extraordinary sight.'<sup>1</sup>

After spending some time with an old friend whom he met at Gaya, he returned to his native town, a different man. He lived at home, but he was not able to keep on his school. Gone was his old delight in grammatical disputations, and he could now speak to his pupils only of the love of Krishna. He mingled with the Vaishnavas of the town, and by his emotional fervour no less than by his intellectual distinction, soon became their leader, and the leader of a rapidly growing number. They used to meet each evening in a courtyard to sing the name of Krishna, and the songs of his exploits, until the early hours of the morning.

The emotional effect of such singing on the sensitive Bengali temperament is very great, and Chaitanya, leader of the singing, became leader, too, in those manifestations of

<sup>1</sup> *Chaitanya Charitāmrita*.

devotion (bhakti), culminating in long trances, which are associated in all lands with abnormal types of mysticism. The numbers grew daily, converts included Mohammedans, and they began to sing their songs in procession through the town. With this came opposition, especially from the pandits who disliked the 'enthusiasm,' but it does not seem to have been really serious and stories tell of how Chaitanya overcame it by the infection of his devotion. Before long he took another important step, in spite of his mother's opposition, and became a 'sannyāsi.' A modern Bengali teacher says: 'He felt that there was a strong party in Navadwip who were not slow to calumniate him everywhere. He thought that as a householder his teaching might not commend itself to all classes and therefore determined to renounce the world, turn a "sannyāsi" and preach the love of God all over India.'<sup>1</sup> Be this as it may, it was indeed a natural step for a religious leader in India to take, if not an inevitable one.

The remainder of his life was spent at Puri with the exception of two important pilgrimages. It is said that his mother, overwhelmed with grief when he was leaving her, persuaded him to settle at Puri, where she could get news of him annually from the pilgrims to Jagannāth's temple. His arrival was marked by scenes of ecstasy and enthusiasm, but after a few months he set out on a pilgrimage to South India, which occupied nearly two years, in the course of which he went as far as Madura. During this time he visited many of the famous shrines of the south and he also preached and sang of Krishna and 'bhakti.' His methods were always the same. On approaching a town he would start to sing and dance, attracting the crowd and communicating to them the ecstasy which he felt himself. He made some notable converts, but stories of mass conversion which abound in his 'Lives' have to be read in the light of subsequent history—there is no ap-

<sup>1</sup> D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*.



parent trace of these in South India to-day. After his return to Puri and a further residence there of three years he set out to Brindaban, the sacred city of the Vaishnavas, thus fulfilling a long-cherished wish. When he gazed on the scenes where Krishna and Rādhā sported, he fell into a trance and his life was despaired of. His trances were so frequent and led him into such danger, that his companions decided to get him away as soon as possible, and he was taken away in a boat while still in a trance. From this time till his death some eighteen years later he never left Puri. He lived there with a few chosen disciples, and received year by year the homage of many pilgrims. The later part of his life seems less productive than the earlier, and his trances and other abnormal visitations increased. The cause of his death is obscure, and the story—as indeed the whole of his life—is overlaid with legend. Many devotees believe that he was translated.

At an early period he was deified, being regarded as an incarnation of Krishna, and as such he is regarded by his followers to this day. There is no doubt that he created a powerful impression on all whom he met. Dr. D. C. Sen<sup>1</sup> says: 'We verily believe that he was a god-man vouchsafed to Bengal in order to raise her out of the stupor into which she had sunk for ages. He embodied in himself that spirit of faith and love which his country aspired to reach, rising out of the extremely sceptical opinions of latter day Buddhism.' It remains to ask what that 'spirit' was and what it accomplished.

Miss Evelyn Underhill<sup>2</sup> speaking of the 'Characters of the Spiritual Life,' says: 'The rich experiences of the religious consciousness seem to be resumed in these three outstanding types of spiritual awareness. The cosmic, ontological or transcendent; finding God as the infinite reality outside and beyond us. The personal, finding Him as the living and responsive object of our love, in immediate touch with us.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Evelyn Underhill, *Life of the Spirit and Life of To-day*, Ch. i.

The dynamic, finding Him as the power that dwells within or energizes us. These are not exclusive but complementary apprehensions, giving objectives to intellect, feeling and will. They must all be taken into account in any attempt to estimate the full character of the spiritual life, and this life can hardly achieve perfection unless all three be present in some measure.' It is interesting to examine the religious experience of Chaitanya with this analysis in mind.

There can be no doubt as to which of these three elements dominated his life. He found God incarnated in the person of Krishna, and he exalted 'bhakti' as the path for finding God. And into this conception of God as a person he put a wealth of emotional fervour which has seldom been equalled. His nature found an outlet in the stories of Krishna, particularly of his exploits with the 'gopis' of Brindaban, and with Rādhā the chief of them. The passionate songs written around these themes by the early Vaishnava poets of Bengal were sung by him continually. According to his own practice and the teaching of the sect, the only way to attain to the blessedness of union with the beloved was in contemplation to enter the form of Rādhā and to experience her emotions. It is told that when he was approaching Brindaban, he found two shallow pools in a rice field and rapturously bathed in them thinking that they were the pools in which Krishna had dallied with his love. In spite of the erotic nature of the whole idea it has never been laid to his charge that he encouraged any of the abuses which have sometimes arisen from the employment of such ideas; his influence rather has led to their being interpreted spiritually. His life abounds in stories illustrating the sheer abandon of his emotions. When he first went to Puri, for example, 'At sight of Jagannāth's temple he became absorbed. Prostrating himself in love, he began to dance. His followers as though possessed, all danced and sang. With the Master, rapt in love, they went along the highway, laughing, weeping, dancing, roaring! The six mile

journey became a thousand!'<sup>1</sup> The emotion aroused by the movement created a new form of expression worthy of it, the 'sankirtan.' This originated from the evenings spent singing in the courtyard at Navadwip. As the enthusiasm and the numbers grew, the devotees led by Chaitanya went out into the town in procession, singing and dancing. If the leader of such processions is a man who can abandon himself to the emotion of the moment, he works himself and the whole company with him into a frenzy, in which they become quite oblivious to their surroundings. These 'sankirtans' are common in Bengal to this day, and although perhaps something of the early spontaneity has been lost, they are still a powerful instrument of mass suggestion. They are central to Vaishnava worship.

The increasing intensity of Chaitanya's emotional manifestations as his life advanced is in itself an indication of the extent to which the other elements of his nature were subordinated to feeling. The frequent trances of his later years were a natural result of the orgy of emotion in which he had indulged. As a youth he was held to be intellectually brilliant, but he did not develop as a thinker, and indeed he was despised as an emotional 'trickster' by most of the intellectuals of his day. In his later life he read very little and what reading he did was confined to a few books. His theology (which he owed to Nimbārka, a fourteenth-century Vaishnava) was immanentism touched with emotion, for the sense of God as transcendent has never been dominant in Indian thought.

Chaitanya set on foot important movements in the social life of his country, but as he advanced in years his own activities were less in evidence, and the practical element gave way to the emotional, as the intellectual had done. The early enthusiasm remained but it was directed into channels of 'bhakti,' by the assiduous cultivation of an extreme form of emotional mysticism. His best work was

<sup>1</sup> *Chaitanya Charitāmrita*.

done in the earlier part of his life. But even at that time there is no evidence to show that he thought of God as energizing spirit. He was not a reformer conscious of a divine mission, but a warm-hearted lover who wanted to share his experience with all. The expression of the evangelical experience:

O that the world might taste and see  
The riches of His grace;  
The arms of love that compass me  
Should all mankind embrace—

might have been uttered by Chaitanya. The first and most important consequence of his own conversion was that he fired others with the spirit which he possessed, and there is an amazing catholicity in the types of his converts. One of the leading philosophers of the day, Vāsudeva Sarva-bhauma, founder of the Navya Nyāya school of logic, became his convert during his first visit to Puri, captured not by argument, but by the earnestness of Chaitanya's devotion. During his southern pilgrimage he met the governor of Rajamundry on the banks of the Godaveri, and as a result of this meeting the governor, Rāmananda Ray, became a lifelong disciple. Through the governor he was introduced to the king of Orissa, Pratāpa Rudra, who also became his disciple and gave him every encouragement to preach throughout the kingdom. Rupa and Sanātana, two of his most famous disciples, were high officials in a Moham-medan court, who had embraced Islam for the sake of material advancement. They sought him out when they heard that he was passing near at hand, and as a result their lives were changed. They left their work and followed him. There is a story of two drunken loafers who were shamed into remorse and repentance by his meek and loving behaviour towards them. But whether his converts were in some way notable, or whether they were—as in most cases—from the mass of ordinary folk, it was his infectious enthusiasm and love which converted them.

Social consequences were secondary, but by no means non-existent. This may be seen in his attitude to caste. The way of 'bhakti' recognizes no human barriers, and any one can be a devotee of God. He preached to all and received all into his fellowship. Among his Mohammedan converts was an ascetic named Haridās who lived with him at Puri and whom Chaitanya buried with his own hands. It cannot be said that he was utterly consistent. On the one hand he said: 'There is no consideration of caste or family in the worship of Krishna.'<sup>1</sup> On the other hand Haridās never used to enter the temple at Puri and of this Chaitanya approved. He also ate in a place apart from the other disciples. But when all deductions have been made, it remains true that Chaitanya's teaching and practice were far in advance of his day. He and his companions at Puri on one occasion swept the temple, thus doing the work of sweepers. His follower Nityānanda went further than his master and admitted low caste people *en masse* to the order of Vaishnavas, and was himself outcasted from Hinduism for doing so. No permanent revolution remained as the result of this ferment, but to this day the lot of the low castes is better in Bengal than in most parts of India.

He also simplified religion. No priest was needed at a 'sankirtan,' where all could join. To attain the goal of 'bhakti' no means were so effective as the singing of the name of Krishna, and thus to be carried away by the love of God. This was a door open to the poor, the ignorant, to sinners, and to women as well, and not reserved for those privileged by birth, class or sex. At the present day Brindaban, the spot made famous by the exploits of Krishna, is one of the most famous places of pilgrimage in India. At the time of Chaitanya it was largely forgotten and overgrown with jungle. The reclamation of the sacred sites has been called 'the one constructive purpose of Chaitanya's life.'<sup>2</sup> It was

<sup>1</sup> *Chaitanya Charitāmrita*.

<sup>2</sup> Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*.

the dearest wish of his heart to undertake the task himself, but when he settled at Puri he had to give up the idea. Yet he succeeded through his followers. The enthusiasm which was able to draw so many men to him was also able to inspire a few to leave their master, to live many miles away in another part of India, and to accomplish what he had set them to do.

Chaitanya wrote nothing but eight Sanskrit verses. One of these says: 'Humbler than the grass, more patient than a tree, honouring others yet without honour oneself; such a one is ever worthy to take the name of Krishna.'<sup>1</sup> He cultivated this humility in his own life, for he had no object beyond being 'worthy to take the name of Krishna.' Ruysbroeck says that the first great mark of the truly spiritual type is that 'they aim at God.'<sup>2</sup> This can be unhesitatingly affirmed of Chaitanya. From the time of his conversion at Gaya his progress may not have been uniform, but he never looked back. In another of his verses he expresses the deepest desire of his life: 'O Lord of the world, I do not want wealth, or relation, or beautiful wife, or poetic genius; birth after birth may I have disinterested faith in you.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chaitanya Charitāmrita*.

<sup>2</sup> Cited from Miss Evelyn Underhill, *op. cit.* Ch. ii.

<sup>3</sup> *Chaitanya Charitāmrita*.

W. J. CULSHAW.

## BELIEF IN GOD AND MODERN THOUGHT

**T**HERE is a passage in Ecclesiastes which has been notably translated: 'God hath set eternity in their heart.' Curiously, if the vowel-pointing of one short word is altered, it could be rendered: 'God hath set ignorance in their heart.' There is a world of difference in the two meanings—the one that God has implanted within the heart of man a yearning for eternity and its fuller life, and the other that He has begotten ignorance within us to conceal from us the secrets of His power.

We may doubt, perhaps, that the first exalted translation is in keeping with the intriguing pessimism of the author of Ecclesiastes, the beauty and the despair of whose mind alternately attract and repel us; we may indeed suspect that the second rendering is more congenial to the secret pleasure of his sadness; but there is one thing that we may not doubt, and that is that the doctrine that God hath set eternity in the heart of man resounds all through the pages of the Old and New Testaments. It is that which Dean Matthews recently has called 'the inveterate supernaturalism of the Hebrew religion.' It is this theistic background of our ancient faith—this prevailing idea, sustained valiantly through the surge and toil of the centuries, that God is behind and above all things, that He has set eternity in our human hearts, and that the ultimate goal and explanation of our life is in Him, that I wish to emphasize and to ask whether it is still the ground of our faith in these modern days.

It is a far cry, from the ancient days when God was so real to men that they believed that He fought their battles and held the world in the hollow of His hand, to the teaching of a modern writer like Bertrand Russell, who believes that the external world may be an illusion, but, if it exists at all, it consists of events short, small and haphazard, and that



the orderliness we think we see in it is purely a figment of our own minds. 'I think the universe,' he says, 'is all spots and jumps without unity, without continuity, without coherence or orderliness.'<sup>1</sup>

It is a far cry from the robust and simple faith of the Old Testament to the creed of the Scientific Humanist of our day, who believes that we are in touch with nothing higher in the universe than human nature, and that if anything is worthy of worship it is its ideals, spun out of its mind in the long course of evolution without any help from without, since, as far as we know, there is no such cosmic, spiritual help beyond and above the human mind.

It is a far cry from the old belief in a supernatural order to much of the Emergent Evolution of our day—I mean the philosophic doctrine that what we call the spiritual had no primordial existence, but simply emerged from lower antecedents in the course of the ages. In the dim beginning of things we are invited to behold space and time interacting with at length matter emergent, then matter in more complex forms with life and sentience emergent, then later on, through the medium of greater complexity, mind emergent—or soul, if you will—and some would even say, though not all, with Deity emergent all through the process.

There is obviously a profound difference between belief in a Creative Spirit which produced the universe and whose mind unfolds in its evolutionary history, and belief in a Deity gradually begotten by the unfolding universe itself. We may, in the liberal use of terms, call both God; but the latter emphatically is not the God of the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptures.

The most urgent religious question to-day, on the intellectual side and therefore ultimately in the practical business of life, is that of belief in God—I mean in God as personal and in vital touch with human life. Dean Matthews says: 'The centre of the battle has shifted. The strategic

<sup>1</sup> *Scientific Outlook*, p. 98.

point is no longer the problem of the historical Jesus, though that remains, but the prior question of the validity of theistic belief, without which the teaching and mission of Jesus must be meaningless.<sup>1</sup> This statement of Dr. Matthews is, I think, not too strong. Christianity, as we know it, is meaningless apart from belief in a personal and loving God. Christ's ethics have little or no meaning apart from His theism. I understand that Mr. Middleton Murry has recently suggested that true unselfishness can best be gained by the acceptance of the doctrines of materialism, which are most likely to restrain personal ambition. A materialist, one need not deny, may love his neighbour as himself; he may become to us an example in charity, in patience and in self-denial; but the point at issue is this—that the strength and the meaning of all these virtues for Christ lay wholly in the nature of God. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount urges upon us unmeasured love and unwearied patience simply because the fountain of this overflowing life is in God. The rationale of Christ's ethics lies wholly in His theism. Apart, then, from belief in a personal and loving God, the ethics of Christianity and its doctrines of redemption would lose their vital meaning, and, if they survived at all, would be merely the pale ghosts of their former being.

We may notice in the world to-day at least two types of philosophical or religious theory. First, the teaching of those who believe that our life with its moral and religious ideals is from above—that is, that its explanation lies in something which has existed before the foundation of the world—in something that is eternally *given* in creation. Secondly, there is the doctrine of those who believe that our morality and our religion are really spun out of our own minds in the long course of our evolutionary progress, and that their sanctions have therefore a subjective origin. Christianity, as I see it, must always be on the side of the former. As a preface to this may I draw attention to a curious assumption

<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Construction.*

that our modern habit of thought almost binds upon us? We are far too ready to assume that the new discoveries and achievements appearing in the progress of our moral and spiritual life are really *cosmically* new. We have discovered so much and made such progress in our own short, eventful life and in the life of our adventurous race, that we are tempted to think that this is the first emergence of ~~these~~ spiritual things in the universe, whereas they may be of immeasurably ancient lineage. We may be simply repeating in the arena of our tiny world that which has been enacted in many other cosmic moral arenas long before our solar system was born. I mean, that the beacon of our moral ideal may really have been kindled at a fountain of light burning since the dawn of creation. The idea of progress may be purely a local thing—it may have little cosmic significance. The illumination of God may be behind us in our cosmic path just as brightly as it is before us.

Take, for example, our moral ideal. It is fashionable to account for it in many quarters on purely natural grounds. We seem to be able to trace it back anthropologically in the history of the tribe and to find its origin in social custom, &c. Therefore we conclude that we have spun it out of our corporate mind. We might have woven, from within, another kind of ideal; but, as a matter of fact, we have begotten this one, and its authority is therefore subjective. That is one explanation of the matter. Another explanation is that the moral order is, as I have suggested, of more ancient lineage than our race—that it is as old as the universe itself, and that it arises in us in this corner of the world because the cosmos is shot through with the bright web of its sanctions, and we are organic to the universe. In a word, the origin of our moral ideal is in God. Now the Christian thinker, faced with these alternative explanations of his moral ideal—one, that it is in a sense adventitious and purely the creation of the race, and the other, that it is cosmically ancient and universal because it is in God—must accept, I submit, the latter.

We need to-day in our theology a much more robust and valiant faith in God—that is, we need far more intellectual courage and independence in setting forth the reasonableness and the power of belief in a personal God. Theologians a while ago, I venture to think, surrendered far too meekly the Argument from Design to the evolutionists. Though their artificial and detailed scheme of design was no longer tenable, they might have held with more vigour and insight that, cosmically speaking, the general idea of it was still valid. To take one illustration only of this. Matter, as its analysis suggests, seems hospitable to the knowing mind. It is *knowable*; in its atomic structure it is not crazy or chaotic, but ordered and hospitable to classification and interpretation. It looks as if it were *designed* to be known, and its consequent indissoluble union with mind is one of the most important open secrets of the world, to the wonder and illumination of which so many, even philosophers, seem strangely blind.

Similarly the theologians, far too meekly, at the behest of the emergent evolutionists, released their firm hold of the idea of creation of all things by God. They are now returning to the idea, at the instance of scientists like Sir James Jeans, who suggest that as matter seems to have in its atomic structure an element resembling nascent mind, the whole fabric of the universe may be thought in the Universal Mind, and, therefore, may have been created by Mind. We surely, however, did not need the atomic physicists to assure us that the idea of world creation by God is beset by fewer difficulties than those which stand in the path of rival hypotheses. Professor Samuel Alexander, for instance, in his notable work, *Space, Time and Deity*, envisages a primordial beginning with Space and Time interacting before the emergence of matter. It is surely no easier to think of space without material bodies and time without occurrences, than it is to think of God the Creative Spirit existing before the birth of the world.

It is not difficult, I imagine, to suggest the outlines of an argument in favour of the intelligibility of the world around us, and therefore productive of faith in a Universal Mind. We could commence with our own creations of reason. The science of Pure Mathematics is the creation of human reason; it was not given to us, but is begotten by us. The physicist, analysing closely the structure of the atom, finds it hospitable to the mathematical formulae our mind has created. When he has explained away all else these hardy equations remain and their light alone seems to illumine the arena of the elusive electron. Things like this suggest that reason is not only in us, but that its effects lie in the things we contemplate; and, doubtless, it is in us because it is in the wider universe in which we draw the breath of life—that is not far from saying that it is in God.

But it may be objected: 'We all believe in the *existence* of God! Our problem is not that; it is to know how to reconcile His goodness with our human pain and bewilderment.' I think we can detect in the Book of Job a moment when that ancient sufferer begins to be calm, because he is sure that God knows of his anguish, even though He offers no explanation of it. Many in our time would say: 'If only we *knew* that God lives and is good, we, who know so little about the moral government of the universe, could leave with patience and contentment our unanswered questions to the illumination of the days to come.'

I therefore plead that we in the ministry of the Christian Church should seek the re-orientation of our belief in God; that we should not take too much for granted, but with courage and insight should endeavour to set before men persuasive and convincing reasons, harmonious with modern thought, for the theistic faith that is in us.

Many people prefer to be agnostic because they believe the riddle of life is quite insoluble and that God is beyond our thought. They hold that we simply are not able, even in imagination, to confront ultimate questions such as the

beginning of the world, its creation by God or its final meaning. Plainly these things are beyond us. Why devote valuable time to them? Why not get on with the practical business of life? Surely this is a rather abject intellectual surrender! If we keep on trying, the race may develop a power of envisaging abstract things and primordial beginnings baffling to us at present. A century ago no one, I think, professed to understand the fourth dimension. Now some, at any rate, imagine they do. In a hundred years it may be plain to the average man. The intellectual challenge of the vast universe at the heart of which we are alive is surely one of the most exciting and creative things in life, and belief in God is bound up with this momentous stimulus.

It is somewhat fashionable to-day to believe that to appeal for help from above—that is from God—is a sign of a rather weak dependence. The nobler attitude is to fight the battle of life unaided. This objection, held, I believe, by Bertrand Russell and others, is somewhat like the contention that it is selfish to desire personal immortality. I should suggest that the desire for immortality is, at least, the tribute that we pay to our much-appreciated life here on the earth. It surely is not a craven thing to desire help from above. If God really lives and offers us His aid, this is the most amazing enlargement of our life that we can imagine. It is rather small-minded, I think, to fling defiance at the universe which gave us birth, and of whose moral government we know so little. Prayer to God is not a feeble cry for help; it is a laying hold of something that is immeasurably greater than ourselves.

A common difficulty in the way of belief in God to-day lies in the stupendous vastness of the universe as revealed to us by modern astronomy. With nebulae—*island universes*—more than 150 million light-years distant from us, and suns in our own stellar system greater in diameter than that of the orbit of the earth, and with the age of suns as bewildering as the distance of nebulae, is it to be wondered at that men



ask whether God knows anything about us in this tiny planet? The reply to this seems to be that it is really craven thus to yield to the tyranny of matter—to the tyranny of size and distance. Our thought, which can range at will through the universe, annihilates distance, exhibiting the supremacy of spirit. There must be some way of annihilating both immeasurable distance running out interminably from the present place and immeasurable time running back interminably into the past and forward into the future. God, the Eternal Spirit, surely must know all time as present and all space as here beneath His eye. At any rate, to imagine that our spiritual life is the only flicker of such illumination in the vast material universe seems to me to be preposterous.

There are, of course, many who nevertheless will say that it may be easy enough to believe in a Universal Mind, but it is much more difficult to believe through all the stress of life in a Loving Father solicitous for the welfare of every human soul. The answer to this very real difficulty is, I believe, in Christ. It is a very memorable and comforting thing that the One among us who had clearest knowledge of the spiritual world—and who will deny this of Christ?—had also the most sublime and simple faith in the love of a Heavenly Father not far from any one of us. This, if I may say so here, has been my stay often in the stress of doubt. The point at the moment is not whether you or I believe whole-heartedly in the love of God, but that Christ, whose vision was far clearer than ours, believed utterly in it. It is to many of us, I am sure, an abiding source of comfort and of hope to remember that the Highest among us taught the beauty and power of faith in God with such amazing simplicity and calm certainty.

I wish now to come to a more practical part of my subject, and to suggest how profoundly belief in God influences our presentation of the Christian Gospel to men. The Christian religion, whether we view it in the New Testament or in subsequent history, makes, as we know, tremendous demands



on our faith. It is not easy in these days to keep step with its jubilant and its 'inveterate supernaturalism,' if I may here apply Dr. Matthew's phrase. I much dislike the word 'supernaturalism'; but it will serve to indicate the Power which, as the New Testament constantly suggests, has set eternity in the heart of man. Our modern tendency is to reduce this element of marvel, and, therefore to simplify, as we think, the Christian faith. Our peril is that in our commendable desire to simplify it, we are in danger of eliminating the thing that made its birth a turning-point in history and its development a purifying and redeeming force amongst mankind. It is so easy, and, as far as it goes, so true to set forth Christ to men in all the beauty and power of the ageless simplicities of the human spirit on which He built His life. This is a most attractive presentation of the Figure of Christ, and we all come beneath the lure of it. Moreover, it seems to be such a reasonable simplification of the life and appeal of Jesus, and therefore of the Christian faith. It is easy to show that the unchangeable verities of the human spirit, which are as fragrant and as precious to us to-day as they were in the days of Abraham, and which have suffered little change in the toilsome passage of the years, are love, pity, honour, righteousness and so on; and to go on to say that Christ built all on these, believing that they were the ultimate values in human life. It is not difficult to set the life of Jesus and His Cross in the centre of this attractive presentation.

Is this, however, a simplification of real Christianity? This was not the presentation of Christ that disturbed and overcame the far-reaching civilization of His day. St. Paul, truly, both in his spirit as well as in some exalted passages of his teaching, has moving parallels to the beauty of the Sermon on the Mount; but the Christian faith to him and to his contemporaries was not chiefly an exhibition of the peerless ethics of Jesus of Nazareth. It was to them an irruption of God into the course of our human history. This militant theism spreads its banners in the Acts of the Apostles

and the clang of its cymbals resounds all through the New Testament. Christ truly begot these unfading, ageless qualities of the spirit in the souls of the faithful in the first century; but the Gospel to them was not primarily what we call the doctrine of the inner light; it was that of a light beyond the world, burning at the very throne of God. I know that it may be said that our ethical interpretation is truer than this highly-coloured supernaturalism of the New Testament. But are we sure that this is so? I suppose it would be possible without any belief in God for one to believe in an august Person, the Flower of the race, appearing in due time with the sheen of the imperishable virtues of the human spirit on his soul. Is not the peculiar urgency of the Christian Gospel just in this—that this redeeming love of Christ has its source beyond the world? It has its source at the heart of things in God, who is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

Now it seems to me that if we are to retain the strength of the New Testament appeal, we must find the imperishable beauty and power of Christ not chiefly in His heritage in the race, but primarily in Almighty God. It is, of course, in the race, and it was Christ's inheritance there; but it is there because it is first in God, in whom we all draw the breath of life. I have no quarrel with the man who says simply that love is the most redeeming power on earth. Of course it is. But I should like to go further and to say that what we call redeeming love is immeasurably older than our human race, that it is something deeply laid in the moral and spiritual heart of this universe of ours—in a word that it is essentially in God, and therefore in Christ the manifestation of the Spirit of God to us upon the earth. I am striving in some way to say that the urgency and the power of our Christian message will be largely in proportion to the strength and vitality of our belief in God. If we lose our hold of this faith, we lose the essence of the Gospel, and no ethical ideal, however beautiful, will make up for the deficiency.

LESLIE E. BENNETT.

## THE IDEA OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

**R**IGHTEOUSNESS is a conception that has a prominent place in the thoughts of men. The word righteousness, with its cognates 'the right' as the abstract, and as the concrete 'the righteous,' are terms that have been long in common use. Every theory of Ethics and almost all religions are concerned with the idea itself, with the standard of right and with the character of the righteous man. The Christian Religion is pre-eminent for its emphasis upon the vital importance of righteousness, and this in both the character and government of God and the dispositions and deeds of men. The idea has been discussed throughout the Christian centuries, with the result that its content has been brought ever more clearly to light. Even so the conception is not yet as full, as clear and as well-defined as could be desired.

The root-meaning of the word in English as in other languages, e.g. Latin, Greek, Hebrew, is conformity to a standard. An action is a right action when it is in accord with the standard present to the mind of the man who passes judgement on it, whether he be the agent or a spectator. A person is righteous whose disposition and conduct conform to the standard, and he exemplifies righteousness when his total character and habitual practice embody the standard and afford a concrete instance of it. This is the first and germinal form of the idea. The idea does not lose this form in the course of its development. The standard changes with the social development of the nations in their moral and religious life; but the idea preserves its form, and always righteousness means that a person's character and behaviour accord with the standard which is accepted at the time.

The earliest standard of righteousness is 'the customary.' Custom prescribes the canons by which actions are adjudged to be right or wrong. 'It is not so done' condemns the doer

of the action as departing from the right. Conformity to the prevailing social practice is righteousness. The pressure of the social conventions of the day tends strongly to prevent men from doing wrong, and avails to keep them right. From this stage to the next the step is short; the actions and habits which custom has proved to be good for the moral welfare of the community are formulated into laws. These now become the standard of righteousness. To act in conformity with these laws is to be righteous; to transgress them is to be wicked. This level of development culminates when the many specific and concrete laws are conceived as being the expression of one universal and ideal law—the law of righteousness.

With this historical development of the standard from social custom through positive laws to law as the ideal norm of righteousness is combined a gradual deepening of the conception. Righteousness becomes more inward; the judgment of the right is applied not alone to the overt act of the agent, but to his motive and intention; the disposition of the heart determines whether a man is righteous.

Religion, however, cannot be left out of account. Man's notions of God and His character and purpose, affect profoundly his ethical ideals and moral practices, i.e., his idea of righteousness. When social customs are regarded as protected by God, even if not originated by Him, they are the more watchfully preserved by those who believe in God. If the laws of righteousness are but human devices for maintaining the public good, they are accepted as having much less forceful authority than if they are acknowledged as promulgated by God, and as being declarations of His will. Where the preceptive will of God is regarded as the norm of righteousness, there the laws of truth and right are invested with the highest conceivable authority. The moral law for man is then an expression of the holy will of God. God in His absolute righteousness, with His complete knowledge of the total action, its overt deed and its inmost

intention, and of the whole disposition of the agent, and with His adequate powers for administering His law and executing its sanctions, is both the Judge and the Criterion of the right. The man who is able to stand in His judgement is the righteous man. And only a righteous man is able to stand in His judgement.

Thus far our thought has been moving within the limits of the ethical field. For when God is regarded as the righteous Guardian of morality, and nothing more, the conception belongs to the discipline of ethics, albeit of religious ethics. Here ethics is the prior idea and to ethics religion is subordinated. But there are ethical conceptions in which religion has the superior position and ethics are subordinate to it. In such the righteous God, whose will, made known in the laws He has laid upon men, is the standard of righteousness, not only requires righteousness of men, but also works to produce righteousness in them. This is not a religious ethic; it is an ethical religion. The most eminent and the most familiar of these is the religion set forth in the Bible. There religious ethics, in whatever form it appears, is at length condemned, and ethical religion is enforced. This truth obtains from the earliest period, for it should not be forgotten that the laws promulgated by God through Moses are statements, not only of the righteous practices that He requires of men, but also of the righteousness which He would beget within them. These laws were spoken to a people whom God had taken into relations with Himself in a fellowship of grace.

The mention of God's grace at once brings before us a feature of man's moral condition which cannot be left out of consideration without vitiating in its entirety the idea of righteousness. This feature is man's unrighteousness, alike in deed and in disposition. The question is not: How shall a man from a natural and morally neutral position attain to the righteousness that is set forth before him in the character of his righteous God? It is this: How shall a man

become righteous, as his God is righteous, from his actual position in wickedness, sin and guilt? The seriousness of this question is the fact that by his unrighteousness man is fallen out of his normal moral relations with his righteous God. Because he is living with God in this abnormal relation, man is unable to do the right that God demands of him, to acquire the righteousness that God requires. And more, so long as man continues in this abnormal ethical relation with God, God cannot beget in him the righteousness that is the reproduction of His own. In the interests of righteousness, however, God has taken action to remove this abnormal ethical relation. He, the righteous God, has taken into relations with Himself man in his unrighteous, sinful, guilty condition. This is God's act of grace. God's method of begetting in, and obtaining from, unrighteous men, righteousness like His own, is the method of righteousness by means of grace. By this method the unrighteous man through faith in God's grace is justified, i.e. accepted for the purposes of righteousness.

The history of this religion, as recorded in the Scriptures, shews that for most men this truth sounds too good to be true. Soon after the times of Moses the nation largely lost sight of God's grace, neither did they keep His laws. Were these two related as cause and effect? The Prophets, and conspicuously Isaiah, the son of Amos, and the 'Second Isaiah,' republished God's grace, as did also many of the Psalmists. But Judaism, and especially the later Pharisees, though they did not quite forget it, subordinated God's grace to His law. They transformed Israel's true and characteristic ethical religion into a religious ethic. And even so they did not so much use God's grace for the keeping of His laws, as essay to keep His laws with a view to obtaining His grace. But to do so is to annul the essential idea of grace, and so of righteousness.

This moralistic conception of righteousness has dogged the thoughts, and distorted the lives, of Christians in all



generations, and does so widely to-day. The crucial question may be posed thus: Is the idea of righteousness as the will of God revealed in His law the highest idea of righteousness? Some have answered, and to-day some would say: 'Yes.' To such it may be conceded that this conception is a fine, lofty and noble idea. It has served as a spur to many serious and earnest minds. It has moulded men to high character, and fashioned some austere ethics and commanding theologies. But even so there may be a higher idea of righteousness than the law as the will of God.

For what is the righteousness of God? Is it nothing more than the announcement of His will for men in the laws He has laid upon them, or in the Law as the unity of these? In both the Old and New Testaments God's law is not the only expression of His will. Here we learn that God acts and wills in grace. He declares to men His grace and acts upon them in deeds of grace. The righteous God speaks with favour to unrighteous men and in mercy forgives their guilt. He declares the ungodly righteous, and receives them into fellowship with Himself in order to their becoming righteous. And this way of willing and acting on God's part, His offering His love to them in the form of His grace for their guilt, His mercy for their sinfulness, His fellowship for their becoming righteous—this is the standard of righteousness by which the actions, the dispositions, the characters of men, should be judged.

This idea of righteousness is in accord with the original and fundamental meaning of the term. As we affirmed to begin with, that is right which conforms to a standard. From the beginning and throughout its development righteousness has preserved this form. Its content has changed, grown, expanded, deepened as the standard has risen. And now the highest norm of righteousness is, not God's will declared in His law, but something even ethically better, viz., His will active in grace. And so this righteousness is not primarily something that God wants from men, but some-



thing that He works in them. It is not a righteousness that can be achieved for God by man, the morally competent, but one that can be received by man, the morally incapable.

This idea of righteousness, i.e., that it is God's will of grace for the unrighteous, throws a beam of light on the righteousness of Christ. When He entered upon His life's work by insisting that John should baptize Him, His plea was 'thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.' He required John to baptize Him because He knew His obligation to His righteous Father to raise to its full height the standard of righteousness. Later He was to do this in words, when in His teaching He announced the ethic of God's righteous Kingdom. But now He did it by His action in receiving baptism. For by this action He identified Himself with those who, because they felt, however feebly, their unrighteousness, came to be baptized by John. He numbered Himself with the transgressors. He was determined to be baptized into their unrighteous condition. He publicly, and solemnly, took His place among the unrighteous. He shared with them all the suffering to which they were condemned for their violations of God's laws. Consciously, sympathetically, and in act, He took upon His heart, conscience, will, their sin, their guilt, their suffering. He submitted with a good will to receive upon His Person, and to suffer, God's righteous judgement upon their sin. Under this judgement He lived, and under it He died. By thus suffering God's righteous judgement on the unrighteous—the judgement demanded by God's law—He did honour to this law. And by thus honouring God's law He did not override it, but surmounted it, and established God's grace in supremacy over His law. So God's will declared in His law is not the highest standard of righteousness: this is His will manifested in His grace. Christ is the end, the cessation, of the law, both as the highest standard, and as the sole means, of righteousness. Christ has established the righteousness of grace: He has made grace the norm of righteousness.

The serious believer in Christ is righteous before God by this grace. His guilt is forgiven and he is accepted into fellowship with God, not as he is in himself, but as he is united with Christ—who united Himself with the unrighteous. He is accepted by God, not because he has achieved the righteousness that God's law requires, but because he has consented to receive the righteousness that God's grace has established. United with Christ he lives with God in the righteousness of His grace, because Christ, by His obedience to God in death under God's righteous judgement on the unrighteous world, met and discharged the demands that God holds against the unrighteous. Christ thus abolished (in the strict sense of the word) the law by taking it up into, and embracing it within the sphere of His grace. In all His acts of grace God is righteous. Grace is the highest idea of righteousness. Righteousness comes to its own in grace.

The final standard of righteousness for men is, not God's law, but His gracious action. This is the principle of the Christian ethic. The same righteousness that the unrighteous man receives from God he is to live by, and act out in his relations with his fellowmen. This is the kind of righteousness that the Christian ethic requires from men. They are to love their enemies, to bless those that curse them, to pray for those that spitefully use them. This is the righteousness that exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees. If in Christ's day there were, as recent scholarship shews, Pharisees and Pharisees, then the standard of righteousness conceived and aimed at by the true Pharisee was of a high and noble sort. Nicodemus and Saul of Tarsus were not hypocrites but sincere. Yet when the crucified Christ, risen from the dead, challenged, conquered and captured Saul he perceived and began to pursue a higher and nobler norm of righteousness, not that declared by God in His law, but that set forth in His Son. According to this norm, righteousness consists in obedience, not to God's preceptive will, but to His redemptive will that is seen in action in Christ.

In Christ's ethic for His followers righteousness is doing the deeds, not that God's law demands, but that His grace inspires; not doing that which is right under the rule of God's law, but doing that which is right under His reign of His grace; not merely doing the right, but righting the wrong; to seek not merely the correction of the unrighteous, but his conversion.

For all through life I see a cross  
Where sons of God yield up their breath;  
There is no gain except by loss,  
There is no life except by death;  
Nor justice but by taking blame,  
Nor glory but by bearing shame;  
And that eternal passion saith:  
'Be emptied of glory and praise and name.'

'Nor justice but by taking blame!' All lower ideas of righteousness are transcended by the righteousness that suffers for the wrong done to it by the unrighteous, and by this suffering expiates the wrong-doer, and thus above the unrighteousness discovered by the law establishes the righteousness that comes by grace.

J. GRANGE RADFORD.

## Editorial Comments

### THE LATE GERMAN AMBASSADOR.

One of the most popular figures in diplomatic circles has been removed by the death of the German Ambassador. The Baron von Hoesch was a man of vision, and a considerable force in the maintenance of friendly international relationships. His long association with England had given him an insight into the English mind which few other European statesmen possess.

Those of us who were privileged to know him will not forget the charm of his personality, so free from austerity or patronage, yet possessing a dignity and sincerity which were always convincing. There was no trace of professionalism in his conversation, but an earnestness to understand, and to be understood, for some great purpose which included you as well as himself. He expressed that better patriotism which believed in his nation, not as a section of mankind intended by nature to dominate, but as a society which had a definite contribution to make to the well-being of humanity.

On the last occasion on which I had the privilege of a personal conversation with him I remember, vividly, two things he said. We had been listening to a famous Swedish singer at the house of Pastor Wehrhan. When the music ended there was a spell of silence upon us all. Then, as so often happens, we were no longer people of many nationalities; we were just human beings who had experienced a common emotion. Frau Wehrhan, with her customary thoughtfulness, led us from the silence back to speech. I found myself talking to Dr. von Hoesch. For half an hour or so, we spoke of generalities. Then suddenly, I asked him 'what he thought of England to-day.'

He answered without hesitation. 'To-day, as yesterday, you have a strange gift for friendship which no other people in the world possess. Before the War I was attached to the Embassy in London and made many friends. Then came the day for me to leave. Our country was at war. My English friends said to me: "Good-bye. We are so sorry you must go away." Years after the War was over I returned as Ambassador. Those of my friends who were left came to see me again. They knew I had been an "enemy," but they took my hand and said: "We are so glad to see you back again." They made no reference to where I had been nor to all that had happened since last we met. We just began again where we left off.'—He finished speaking and we looked at one another. 'War is very foolish,' I said stammeringly. He smiled and answered: 'But your English friendship is very wonderful.'

For a little longer we talked about the European situation, and of his generation and mine as it becomes daily less articulate. To-morrow seemed so near—and to-morrow belonged to youth. I can see that

tall figure leaning against a table, on which candles glimmered from great silver candlesticks. About us a crowd chattered gaily. In his eyes there came a far-off look, and suddenly he spoke again, almost wistfully. 'The War was yesterday,' he said. 'I and my generation know we were beaten; but the children, they do not know.' 'Why should they?' I answered. He looked up quickly and on his face there flickered the light of hope.

That was a year ago, and the light has died from some men's hearts in these last months. There are still strong friendly souls in every land, who, like von Hoesch, find friends because they themselves *are* friends. Policies of despair can never make for peace, and individuals who lose hope help to create such policies. As I look back at that great Ambassador I seem to hear him say: 'Sursum corda'—and I think he would say it to the youth of all the world. Lift up your hearts.

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#### EUROPEAN PROPAGANDA AND ISOLATION.

One of the most astonishing features of the new world in which we are living is the intensity and extensiveness of political propaganda. Much is made of the shrinkage of the world caused by increased facilities for transport on sea and land, as well as in the air. The rapidly developing means for the communication of ideas by broadcasting has also been emphasized. Little has been said about the flood of literature which is sweeping across frontiers and penetrating into hitherto inaccessible places.

A few years ago it would have been extremely unlikely that the editorial department of a religious publishing house would have received regular information about the activities of a small section of a central European state. This is, however, the case not in a single instance but from very many directions. In this strange new age there is no longer any real possibility of isolation.

Within a few weeks one has received regular programmes of Russian broadcasts on educational, economic and political subjects with a polite request that they be published as widely as possible.

Elaborate brochures describing progress in Soviet Russia and in Poland have arrived by the same mail. Interesting and provocative books have come from Budapest, Berlin and Calcutta, whilst German and Austrian periodicals, noteworthy examples of special pleading, are regularly received.

Successive editions of a book dealing with the 'oppression' of the Magyar minority in Czechoslovakia proclaim the fact that 'the moral and material pillars of Magyar civilization are being shattered and buried in the shadow of a sham democracy.' The policy of reducing Magyar minorities by restoring them to their mother country is strongly urged. Masaryk's own words are quoted as a logical basis for a revision of the present frontiers. 'Political independence is indispensable to a people, cultured and aware of its dignity; a people politically unfree will be oppressed, economically and socially exploited even in States risen to the summit of cultural evolution.' Therefore,

says the author of this virile plea, Slovakia and Ruthenia must be restored to Hungary to which their geographical situation, the course of their rivers and the whole structure of their production binds them.

How widely must such propaganda be spread if it reaches not only to England, but to its sectional journalistic centres.

In another book, Dr. Eugene Horvath writes a vigorous criticism of Professor Seton-Watson's *History of the Roumanians*. The author is concerned with defining the proper place of Transylvania in Hungarian history. In an almost bitter conclusion he writes: 'Transylvania was conquered by the force of arms and came into Rumania's possession as the spoils of war. This was the real cause of the struggle that began between the nations there and between the Churches. It mirrors a racial struggle that under the protection of Rumanian armed force is bent on uprooting all that is not Rumanian and Orthodox. . . . The forces of nature and of historical progress are not to be annihilated by armed force. Transylvania will always be Transylvania. And the unique character of the Transylvanian people will not permit foreign influences to stand in the way of its own particular development which, during the centuries of Magyar hegemony, was the product of its own vital forces.'

We have only dealt with one small section of the propaganda which comes regularly into our hands. The printing-presses of the world were never busier than they are to-day, and to talk of isolation in such a world is an absurdity.

Where there is so much unrest, no country can remain a clearing-house for discontent. Nor can any one country assume the right or undertake the responsibility of solitary interference. All the logic of present circumstance points to the imperative need for a strong League of Nations in which Minorities, created by the Treaties of yesterday, shall be at least articulate. No one can say the creation or reconstitution of the League is an easy task, but no one has the right to shirk it because it is difficult. The day of nationalism is passing, in spite of certain immediate phenomena, and one of the factors which is responsible is the printing-press. Therein lies a power which might do much to transform selfish assertion into co-operative nationality.

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### THE SOUL OF A RUSSIAN.

Many people have been puzzled by the fact that Russia became the scene of the first great experiment in Marxian economics. One of the exiles, Professor Fedor Stepun, has supplied an interesting solution to the problem. The 'tension between barbarism and holiness' he believes to be a fundamental principle in Russian character.

The author, himself, is an example of much of his theory. After serving in the Russian army in the War, the man who had begun his career as a lecturer at Moscow University became successively a representative to the Congress of workers, peasants, and soldiers, and head of the Cabinet of the War Administration. After the



Bolshevik Revolution he worked with relatives in an agricultural community. Subsequently he became Director of the Original Theatre of the Revolution. To quote his own words: 'The last scene of my life amid the Soviet involved a trial before the Tcheka and a very intensive scrutiny of my services to the State. After hearing my answers to their various questions I was, with one hundred other well-known scholars, sent into Germany.' Professor Stepun is a friend of Nicholas Berdyaev, and, like him, a member of the New City group of Russian thinkers.

He believes that Russian Communism is an expression of Russia's religious experience. In his book he describes the struggle between two types of idealism—the Russian characteristically changes every philosophy into a religion.

The first part of this remarkable book deals with revolution as an expression of the Russian soul, and the second part with the Russian soul in its revolutionary expression.

Work develops character when it is carried on with love, but this condition was lacking for the Russian peasant, which is one reason for what is sometimes called his barbarism.

In a fearless enunciation of the present problem, he says Russia has been 'forced into self-contradiction by the spirit of sin.' Professor Stepun is intensely religious himself and he believes that his people may finally achieve a spiritual triumph—but the day is not yet.

This is a strong book, with much provocative matter which sets one thinking. In these days when sane criticisms of the present régime are few, it is thrice welcome to every student of contemporary history.

*The Russian Soul and Revolution*—Fedor Stepun—(Scribners. 6s.)

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## PROBLEMS OF PEACE.

The Geneva Institute of International Relations has done the world a considerable service by publishing the papers given each year at its annual session. In the tenth series the subjects are concerned with the extension of international law and the attempt to establish an effective system of collective action.

At a time when many ardent supporters of the principle of collective security are despondent, it is particularly helpful to read so clear a statement and diagnosis. Amongst the contributors are R. B. Mowat on 'International Anarchy,' W. Arnold-Foster on 'The Elements of World Order,' Dr. Lauterpacht on 'International Law after the Covenant,' Professor Whitton on 'Is American Neutrality Possible?' and Professor Manning and P. J. Noel-Baker on 'The Future of the Collective System.'

In an excellent concluding essay Clarence K. Streit maintains that our main problem is to cure disunion among a few democracies. If we can organize those who believe in co-operation, their union would be strong enough to ensure final world organization. We must begin by restricting our efforts to such democracies. That at any rate is



a possibility, and it seems, at the present moment, to be the only practical possibility.

The whole book is a valuable contribution by men who are in the closest touch with the real situation, and who have given themselves to the task of solving the problem of collective security.

*Anarchy or World Order*—Lectures at Geneva.—(George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 7s. 6d.)

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### ‘THE KING SHALL REJOICE IN THY STRENGTH, O LORD.’

The work of Mr. Frank O. Salisbury as a painter of portraits and historical subjects has already entitled him to a place among the great English artists. It was a wise decision which led to his being commissioned to paint the Jubilee Service of Thanksgiving in St. Paul's Cathedral. There is no one more fitted to give the world a documentary painting of this great historic event. Many men would have been cramped by the conditions which are necessarily imposed in such a task, and work of this character must not be appraised by ordinary standards.

With the composition of the picture already settled, the artist has to select a vantage-point from which he may give the chief figures their proper place in relation to the rest, but, at the same time, he must include the whole assembly. Only a superficial critic could deny that Mr. Salisbury has succeeded splendidly. He has shown us the solemn and inspiring scene in St. Paul's from a point near the organ. The north transept and the nave form an impressive background, with a careful treatment of architectural detail made possible by the sunlight which actually streamed through the upper windows and lit up the central figures of His Majesty King George V and Her Majesty Queen Mary.

Though seventy-five of the figures are actual portraits, the artist has been most successful in making one, alone, stand out in kingly significance. A careful study of the picture gives us first an impression of a solitary form, radiant in the sunlight, paying his homage to Almighty God. Gradually there emerges a second figure, that of Queen Mary, who, though separated by a considerable space, yet seems to be one with her royal husband in their act of thanksgiving. Presently you begin to notice the little Princesses with their intensely human appeal, and the members of the Royal Family, standing—a perfect unity.

Row upon row of personages are carefully portrayed, but no brilliant uniforms, no line of glittering orders, can obtrude upon those central figures. The individuals in that great assembly are in their proper places, because the artist has used light and shade to great advantage.

It is not for us to assume the responsibility of technical criticism, but we cannot refrain from expressing regret that so many reputable critics have missed the key to the whole picture. Beneath the great canvas are inscribed the words, ‘The King shall rejoice in Thy strength, O Lord.’ In this inscription Mr. Salisbury has focused the complete

significance of this historic moment. With intense sincerity he has given us a great documentary painting, but, beyond this, he has borne noble testimony to the faith of a great Sovereign, and to the ultimate Power beyond the State, without whom all man's striving is in vain.

In the years to come this picture will survive, not only as historical evidence, but as a vivid exposition of fundamental truth.

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### THE REAL VICTORIANS.

Neither fierce criticism nor equally violent apologetic has served to portray the true Victorian world to the present generation. For a long time we have been waiting for someone who lived in it to 'talk to us about it' spontaneously, without too rigid a scheme, and with no sense of desperate crusading. In a mood of affectionate recollection and with a spirit of sympathetic interpretation, Mr. E. E. Kellett has brought Victorian and Edwardian England to the people of to-day. He has done it so successfully that we venture to prophesy that his book will be quoted by the folk of a long to-morrow. His recollections, as frank as they are friendly, are a *personal* contribution to history. When the records are ransacked by the eager student in his search for facts he will turn gladly to this delightful book to meet the people. He will find them quite human, less grotesque than the novelists have made them, and he will discover that they, too, had their dreams and laboured to make them come true. Those who have read the keen criticisms, and balanced literary appreciations of the author, in the pages of the *London Quarterly Review*, will discover in this new book, that he is a born raconteur. The excellent stories which he recalls are told naturally, and with a spirit of *camaraderie* which makes us wonder that a man who was a real Victorian can be so understandingly a Georgian too. He does not ask us to deny our prejudice but to 'arrest our judgement,' for he is convinced that, in the course of time, justice will be done. Most of us who read this book will be prepared to give our verdict, and it will not be unsatisfactory to the author, whose patience and modesty are willing to give us time for deliberation.

The book is full of most illuminating reminiscence. Speaking of the informed mind of the working man of fifty or sixty years ago, he 'remembers' meeting such a one in a railway train. After a long conversation on the political situation, Mr. Kellett handed his companion his copy of *The Times*. 'No use to me,' he said, 'I cannot read.'

'Then you are older than I thought,' I replied.

'Yes,' he said, 'I was twelve years old when the act of 1870 was passed, and had to work thirteen hours a day for a long time after that. When I got some leisure, I found I could not learn to read—except, of course, to spell out shop signs and advertisements.'

'Then how did you contrive to pick up your knowledge?'

'I talked and listened, as I have done to-day,' he said with a smile.

We are introduced to a vast crowd of real people, some of them famous statesmen and divines, some notorious criminals—others merely celebrities! We are given material on which to form an estimate of the religious experience, the business morality and the social relationships of the period. The 'Nonconformist conscience' and the strange attitude of orthodoxy maintained for political expediency are both described, and illustrated from personal contacts.

There are few living writers who could have given us a book so charming in its style, so friendly in its relationship with yesterday and to-day, so sincere and restrained, yet so candid and deliberate. We know of no other book that is so satisfactory a mirror of Victorian England. Its author has shown an admirable power of selection, and a generous appreciation of the need of the modern world. It is a volume we shall treasure, for it has given back to us the folk we seemed to have lost.

*As I Remember*—E. E. Kellett.—(Gollancz. 10s. 6d.)

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#### QUESTION-TIME.

A book which contains on its title-page the text 'Bless the Lads' immediately attracts one's attention. After having read it carefully one is convinced that it contains a blessing—one that is conferred on lads of all ages.

The Boys' Club of St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, propounded forty-five questions on religious subjects. They range from 'Who Made God?' to 'Why should a Christian Man not be a Communist?' The answers are as varied as the questions. Amongst those who write are Dr. Mackintosh, Father Martindale, Professor Grensted, the Head Master of Rugby, Professor Strachan, Father Bull, Professor C. H. Dodd and many others of our clearest thinkers.

The charm of the book lies partly in the clarity and simplicity of the answers. There is no 'beating about the bush,' nor is there any special pleading. The questions are straightforward and arresting. Most readers will find they have asked themselves the same things many a time. They will be thankful to get lucid and logical replies to problems which they have often only half-solved. This is not a book for careless, slipshod 'argufiers'—but for sincere inquirers, and for all those whose responsibility and privilege it is to attempt to answer similar questioners themselves.

*Asking Them Questions, Problems in Religious Faith and Life.*—(Oxford University Press. 3s 6d.)

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#### CREATIVE SEX.

Many books have been written on the subject of marriage and parenthood, but too often they have been ill-balanced and short-sighted. The creative element in life is something more than a sexual consideration. As Canon Raven has said, there is need for detachment and intimacy in writing on such a subject. Emotion must never slip

into sentimentality—yet there must be sympathy and sure judgment.

In a little book written calmly and convincingly, Mrs. E. D. Hutchinson has done youth and age a real service. She is no mere theorist dealing with abnormalities, or risking the rousing of an unhealthy excitement in unnecessary intimacies. With full appreciation of biology, psychology and the Christian attitude, she states the case with commendable brevity and equally commendable clarity. Having justified her contention that we need a revaluation of many traditional rules of conduct, she sets out to examine and re-state the Christian position. There is 'an inherent quality of sex which, if it really exists as claimed, can under no circumstances be safely infringed.' With frank sincerity and real sympathy she considers that aspect of sex which is creative of the next generation, the importance of choice and the sacredness of engagement and marriage, as well as 'the darker side of the whole question.' Unlike so many recent writers, she does not pitch her camp and dwell on this particular spot, but she leads us out into the wider sphere of creative sex. This great 'creative power works in men and women to increase the fulness of life. With both hands it is a giver of beauty and joy. . . . No one is apart from its gracious, inspiring influences. But always at its heart there is a certain austerity. For in its processes is involved the renunciation inherent in all the upward trend of life as we know it.' So, gently but firmly, she leads us back to the heart of the Christian faith, 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake, shall find it.'

This is a brave, straight book, which never dwells in the depths, but climbs to the hills where life is sweet and the wind freshens 'so that one really lives.'

*Creative Sex*—E. D. Hutchinson—(George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 3s. 6d.)

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#### INTRODUCING EPSTEIN.

Though the genius of Bernard van Dieren has been acclaimed in many quarters, few people seem to have remembered his critical introduction to the work of Jacob Epstein. Whether one joins with the throng in condemning much that the sculptor has achieved because it is grotesque and bewildering or whether one remains silent in a modest perplexity, the service of van Dieren is a real one.

He refused to incite men to admiration. All he set out to do was to indicate the direction from which the artist's creation should be approached. He could not avoid a measure of interpretation though he refused to write anything which might effect a forcible conversion. Such unconvinced allegiance is always worthless. Those new Christians who embraced the faith as the only alternative to the stake and the fire were no great acquisition to the Church, he declared, and refused to persuade people into an acceptance of the genius of Epstein. In his effort to introduce them he offers a point of view which gives them furiously to think.

Rembrandt and Beethoven have been described as 'instinctives,' primitive men when compared with the versatile and learned Leonardo or Goethe. To this group of creative artists van Dieren held that Epstein should be assigned. He is neither modern nor archaic. 'However familiar Epstein may be with the neurasthenia of modern impressionistic art, his psychological disposition is such that he is not contaminated by it.' With his own attitude made plain, Bernard van Dieren propounded certain principles which should guide the student of art. The work should always be approached without preconceived notions, and, having made the approach one should look at the object patiently and long enough to assimilate its thought.

In such a mood I found myself gazing at Epstein's *Christ*. For a little while I remained unimpressed. Then suddenly I realized there were seven wounds—not five. 'Those eyes that, after seeing every thinkable outrage have forgivingly looked down on Longinus' are pierced. Yet a little longer and I became conscious that 'those lips through which the agonizing wail has passed: "Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachtani"'—they too have received the stigmata.

I do not understand Epstein. I am grateful that van Dieren left me to look patiently and long at that figure, until I knew that neither pierced hands and feet, nor anguished mind, could display the extremity of holy, wounded Love. Somewhere man's burning faith must find its justification in God's broken heart.

No sculpture can express that. There is no medium which can suffice—except it be another broken heart. I turned away from the lonely figure to a world where we still count five wounds, or maybe seven, and sigh for the death of a man—when we might rejoice in the life of God.

# Notes and Discussions

## LATTER PHASE OF MYSTICISM IN ENGLISH POETRY

TOWARDS the end of the eighteenth century, the mystical element, so prominent in the 'metaphysical poets' of the seventeenth century,<sup>1</sup> again becomes pronounced. The stream driven under ground for a hundred years wells up in the art of William Blake. In this strange genius, perhaps mysticism reached the highest artistic level ever attained in English letters and has never since been so fresh and spontaneous. Like Eckhart, Blake gathers up the various impulses of the centuries and anticipates many of its tendencies in the future. In this respect, he occupies in modern mysticism a position like Plotinus to its earlier expression. Blake's mysticism, however, was far too obscure and amorphous to influence his age to any appreciable extent but Transcendentalism was in the air and mysticism finds various expressions in the poets of the nineteenth century. Wordsworth, highly susceptible to the forces of the Romantic revival, was the outstanding poet of that movement and of them all, the most avowedly mystical. Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie demurs at the inclusion of Wordsworth among the mystics, and if we accept his definition of mysticism as 'the life which professes direct intuition of the pure truth of being, wholly independent of the faculties by which it takes hold of the illusory contamination of this present world . . .' we should be obliged to exclude a poet like Wordsworth who keeps his eye steadily fixed upon objects of the visible world. But Mr. Abercrombie has taken Blake as a typical mystic, a view which, if generally approved, would reduce the field to a very circumscribed area. This critic does not seem to realize that Blake was not representative of modern mysticism as including the manifold of life, and that in upholding the 'Via Negativa'—'the great accident of Christian mysticism'—he was to that degree, retrograde in his attitude. As to Wordsworth, it is difficult to think of the poet who sings of

that serene and blessed mood  
In which the affections gently lead us on,  
Until the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul

as less than a mystic.

Perhaps the label 'Mysticism' can only be attached very loosely to Shelley's poetry and there are many ready to contest any association of the word with the poet's name. We may regret, with Stopford A. Brooke, that the thing 'to which he gave his worship should be only the shadow of some greater power, which was itself a shadow,' yet

<sup>1</sup> See my article in *L. Q. & H. R.*, April, 1934.



it must be admitted that his ruling passion was to fuse his spirit with the soul of the universe, however conceived. 'I seek in what I see, the manifestation of something beyond the present tangible object' is a statement from himself that his thoughts flowed generously in a mystical direction.

Second in degree of importance to Wordsworth, we may place the names of Tennyson, Coventry Patmore and Robert Browning. Harold Nicholson has described Tennyson as 'a morbid and unhappy mystic,' a sheer contradiction in terms. The true mystic is never morbid or unhappy, as Mr. Chesterton points out with the weight of tradition to support him. Tennyson had a black and bitter strain in him which was never eradicated and he was never more than a half and half mystic. He was, however, interested in mystical experiences, or what are sometimes described as such, and has left an account of his own trance-like states. Little should be made of these for very unmythical persons may have similar experiences. There are, however, in some of his poems, flashes of genuine mysticism: in 'In Memoriam': in 'The Higher Pantheism': and, more frequent perhaps, in 'The Ancient Sage,' a poem of personal character. Yet for some reason too difficult to explain Tennyson did not succeed in getting the mystical spirit into his verse.

Coventry Patmore's personal experience led him to include marriage and all it connotes, as an integral part of ecstasy and union; and no Christian poet has written more copiously on the subject. It is a matter for regret that his developed thought on sex, contained in his prose work, 'Sponsa Dei,' was committed to the flames because Gerald Manley Hopkins shook his head over it. There was, however, a hard surface of materialism in Patmore's nature and he never completely succeeded in becoming so self-forgetful as to lose himself in the All. He once made an admission tantamount to a confession that his mysticism was adopted and not begotten. Comparing himself with Francis Thompson he said 'My Catholicism was acquired, his inherent.' Many of the features of mysticism appear in the works of Robert Browning. He laid great stress on some of the outstanding features of Christian mysticism in his verse. No one before him had so confidently declared that love was both the unifying principle and the way of life; nor had any stated so categorically the intimate relationship between the instinct of love (even on its sexual side) and spiritual love. In this respect he advanced beyond John Donne, whose poems he admired and whom in the complexity of his nature he somewhat resembled. But Browning's method of approach to the 'Beyond' (in spite of his exalting the heart above the head) was intellectual and philosophical rather than intuitive. 'At the nether base of his faith' he had, perhaps 'a very important strand of first-hand mystical experience,' but taking his works in their entirety, it was in interest, rather than experience that Browning was mystical. His position is on the border-land of mysticism. But because of his psychological methods, his wide range of interests and pleasures, and the definitely religious character of his poetry, his value for reference and illustration



in a study of the development of mysticism in poetry, is highly important.

In their relation to traditional religion, the nineteenth-century poets take up an attitude very different from that of the seventeenth-century group, none of whom ever broke a free lance. The accumulated forces of a century making for personal, political and religious freedom: the impatience with the artificial, whether in men, manners or surroundings: the demand for a freer expansion of human passion than was permitted by either Church or State focused to a point, in France in the Revolution, and in England in the Romantic poets. 'So far as English poetry from 1780 to 1832 is related to the general history of mankind, a great part, a necessary part of its history is best explained by its relation to the Revolution and to the form the Revolution took in France.'<sup>1</sup> It is too much to assume that a man ever breaks completely from the political and religious traditions of his country, however violent his apparent schism may seem to be at the moment.

During the time of reaction, the rebel will readily, often greedily, swallow all sorts of revolutionary notions, many of which he will afterwards reject; yet the good he has been able to assimilate will be added to the permanent stock of ideas and ideals that dominate the mind. The result will reveal itself in a modified, or changed, quality of consciousness, thus ensuring progress both in politics and religion. Wordsworth and Shelley were both, in their own way, deeply religious but for inspiration they received little or nothing from the side of orthodoxy. Wordsworth it is true shares the Transcendentalism of the Caroline poets, particularly their ideas of pre-existence: and both Wordsworth and Shelley were indebted to Greek sources, Wordsworth on the side of philosophy and Shelley for the mythological elements in his verse. But there seems to be no trace of direct influence from Augustine or Eckhart, nor any evidence of the influence of the Spanish mystics as in Donne and Crashaw. Instead, there grew up 'a poetry, mystical, metaphysical, indifferent to history, without the accent of locality.'<sup>2</sup>

In the same century in the year 1855, mysticism was to find, in America, another voice; and if it was difficult to recognize in the 'barbaric yawp' sent over the roof of the world, the more familiar accents, the essential qualities of mysticism were in the speaker and his evangel. Walt Whitman may continue to be an enigma in literature but as a writer of transcendental themes worthy, as Swinburne recognized, to be coupled with Blake, his position is not difficult to define. 'In the instinctive operations of his mind he was a Mystic, one of the persons who in every age and in every variety of formal religious faith, have been intimately and intensely conscious of the reality of spiritual things.' Whitman at the present moment is out of fashion mainly because his views on democracy have been superseded, but his importance as a writer of definitely mystical verse is important and he will well repay study.

<sup>1</sup> Stopford A. Brooke, *Naturalism in English Poetry*.

<sup>2</sup> Saurat, *The Occult in Literature*.

Dr. Bucke has described the unique quality of his experience as 'Cosmic Consciousness.' The term was not actually fresh minted by him but is now so intimately associated with Whitman as to belong to him by right. More than any other writer he has taken the whole range of life including Nature, animal and man as the medium of expressing a sense of Otherness. 'The Song of the Open Road' which is often read as a rhapsody of the countryside, proves to be something very different on close examination. 'You road I enter upon and look round, I believe you are not all that is here, I believe that much unseen is also here.' Trees, along this discovered road, drop the celestial fruit of 'large and melodious thought.' In the 'Song of Myself,' where spiritual and material things play hide and seek with one another (or as Dr. Jean Catel puts it, where the clear consciousness and the sub-consciousness are in conflict), there are lines of incantation that break in upon the train of observation and indicate, by their lyrical intensity, a moment of fused experience, a touching upon ecstasy. The most famous passage is the one beginning with the lines:

Swiftly arose and spread around me the peace and knowledge that pass all  
the arguments of the earth.

And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own

And I know that the Spirit of God is the brother of my own

And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and

the women my sisters and lovers,

And that a kelson of creation is love.

Of 'Crossing Brooklyn Ferry,' Professor Cestre points out that Whitman uses the concrete to render visible to eyes and imagination the fundamental spiritual theme, the whole poem being bathed in a mist of golden reflection. 'Passage to India,' contains, so Whitman said, more of his essential me than any other of his poems and when it is read carefully it becomes clear that the theme is concerned with the Oneness of the Beyond, the very heart of mysticism. India has no locality on the map: sails are set upon a boundless ocean and the ultimate destination is some Spiritual Eldorado where all souls and elements melt and merge into one.

Passage to India!

Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?

The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,

The races, neighbours, to marry and be given in marriage,

The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,

The lands to be welded together.

In such threnodies as 'When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd' and 'Out of the Cradle endlessly rocking' the intensity of lyrical feeling rises to mystical expression. 'Out of the Cradle' is an exquisite blending of a spiritual awakening in adolescence and the ripened experience of manhood, the story of love passing beyond the bounds of life into a state of immortality experienced here and now, perhaps the most perfect mystical verse ever written. Both works are dominated throughout by a mood, enveloped in a kind of luminous mystical haze, imbued and infused with the spirit of transcendentalism.

Taking the whole body of his work we may say that there is no writer who is so consistently and spontaneously mystical in his approach to the whole of life. Everywhere the salient features of mysticism: the sense of the Whole and the actual experience of union with the Beyond: and love as the 'kelson of the universe——' appear in the pages of *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman marks the close of one chapter of mysticism and opens another.

J. H. BODGENER.

## THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS CHURCH REUNION IN ENGLAND

### CURRENTS AND CROSS-CURRENTS

So far as England is concerned the historic divisions that have broken up the unity of Christian life date back more than 300 years. The Puritans, who were the left wing of the Reformation party, desiring the 'reformation of reformation' itself, differed from those who wanted a minimum of change in their ordered worship and way of life. They did not always agree among themselves but gradually they were forced into opposition to the hierarchy and ultimately to Dissent. If we omit for the moment the question of Church order and government, we find that the subjects that were then in dispute have little relevance to-day. The observance of saints' days, the use of symbols such as the ring in the marriage service and the position of the altar or the Lord's table in the church at the East wall of the choir, fenced with a communion rail or removed forward from the wall, seem to us remote discussions now. Nor can it be said that the Church of England view of the ministry to-day as that of a priestly order pure and simple while the Free Church view is that of a prophetic order, whose supreme function is that of preaching, can be regarded as adequate. It is true that there is a school of thought in present-day Anglicanism that puts the chief stress on the priestly office in the act of consecrating the elements of Holy Communion, and the theological explanation of this attitude approaches that of the Roman Catholic Church, but otherwise priestly and prophetic elements find themselves interwoven in the conception of the Christian ministry in all the Churches. Also the distinctions that arise from Church government tend to appear less and less important; Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist ministers are found temporarily occupying Congregational pastorates and vice versa. This does not yet apply to the clergy of the Established Church, but it will be seen that the barrier between a ministry that has been episcopally ordained and one that is not so ordained is not so rigid and eternal as might appear.

It was the Evangelical Revival in the eighteenth century that not only created a great new community separated from the Established Church but also strengthened enormously the Dissenting Churches that were already separated. That separation, as we look back at it, seems to have been inevitable when we know the state of the eighteenth-

century Church. As we look at the causes of it to-day we find that they are no longer operative. The Methodist cannot claim any monopoly of evangelical 'enthusiasm' now. He often finds his fervour for the gospel excelled by his Anglican neighbour. The bishops are no longer prelates and princes of the Church ruling an organization devised rather to provide livings for the younger sons of the aristocracy than to bring life and salvation to the lives of the people. The gross corruptions of the eighteenth-century Church that rivalled the corruption of contemporary political life have disappeared. A worldly clergy that would repel from the Lord's table hundreds of devout communicants is almost inconceivable to-day. Even some of the irregularities of the Methodist enthusiasts are now tolerated in the Church of England and we need feel no surprise to find her clergy preaching in the open-air and conducting missions, nor to find the services of laymen and (more recently) of women welcomed in meetings and organizations of many kinds that would startle the grandparents of the older generation. Some of the old social distinctions are disappearing with the rapid changes that are taking place in English social life. The older Universities have long since ceased to be the preserve of the Established Church; the removal of the disabilities of Nonconformists has been followed by such a wide extension of scholarships that they are now populated as much from the elementary schools as from the aristocracy and the upper middle class. While social distinctions still have some weight in deciding whether worshippers belong to the Church of England or to the Free Churches, they tend to count for less and less in a rapidly changing world.

The consequence of the remarkable change of atmosphere brought about by intellectual and social forces in the last generation is that the Churches have been brought closer together. This movement towards that warm centre of life and faith where Christians discover the value of the things they have in common was accelerated by the War. Not only were men of all sorts and conditions mingled together in a unique manner in the Services, but chaplains of different denominations learned to work together and to form friendships that strengthened the same tendency. Co-operation in social work had been common enough, but deeper fellowship than this was felt to be imperative. Scholars from all Churches had worked together in Biblical and Theological studies that showed the emphasis of the new school of historical criticism, and co-operation in the theological faculties of the Universities revealed kinships and unity rather than differences. It is significant that at the present time the Government can introduce an Education Bill into Parliament making new concessions to Church schools without raising an echo of the bitter controversies of 1870 and 1902. In an age that seems to be increasingly secular in its aims the denominations are beginning to see that to dispute with each other about secondary matters when the very citadel of faith is threatened by modern unconcern and indifference is merely fiddling while Rome is burning.

This does not imply that differences do not remain nor that the story of schism and divisions in the life of the English Church has no

meaning. There was spiritual significance of permanent value both in Puritanism and in the Evangelical Revival. Even in Church Government nothing but loss would result if the valuable experience of Presbyterian and Independent, of Methodist and Quaker were simply thrown away to return to a rigid uniformity of a parochial system administered merely by bishops, priests and deacons. The organization of the Church leading up from the Kirk session through the Presbytery to the Assembly has taught us something. We have learned lessons of value from the democratic gatherings of local Church members, from the silences and inspirations of the Society of Friends as well as from its devotion to social service, from the class meetings and lay preaching of the Methodists and from the militant enthusiasm of the Salvation Army. There would be no gain to the Church Catholic if these distinctive features of Church life were to be summarily discarded. In modified forms they are already operative outside the bodies in which they originated. These modifications also tend to remove denominational frontiers. Methodists, for example, have always used in some of their churches the Order of Morning Prayer from the Prayer-book of the Church of England, though the vast majority of their churches have used extempore prayer in public worship. Either because of the desire for a greater regularity in worship or because of the decline in the 'gift for prayer' there is a strong movement in Methodism towards liturgical forms while in the Established Church there is a marked elasticity in the use of the Prayer-book itself. John Wesley's revised form of the services for the administration of the Lord's Supper and of Baptism have always been used in the Wesleyan Church and are now generally used in the reunited Methodist Church. In forms of worship, therefore, the Churches tend to come closer together.

The main obstacle to a complete reunion in England is the doctrine of the apostolical succession and of the three orders in the ministry as held in so-called Catholic circles. Here a real question of principle is involved. A true evangelical finds it impossible to believe that his Lord ever laid it down authoritatively that His Church should be so ordered. He may be prepared to agree that the Episcopal scheme is the best possible organization for Christ's Church but that it is of the very essence of the Church is inconceivable to him. Also the notion that God has some peculiar grace for those who receive the consecrated elements from a clergy that has been episcopally ordained, which is not granted to those who merely gather the crumbs that fall from the Lord's table, approximates to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. It seems akin to the darker aspects of Calvinism with its rigid predestination of the elect and the reprobate. In the cause of unity many ordained ministers would be prepared to receive episcopal ordination in addition to the ordination they have already received, as a symbol of entrance into the duties and responsibilities of a wider fellowship but it should be understood clearly that nothing more than this would be understood by such an act. The Union Scheme for the Churches in South India brings this out very clearly. It is an interesting

illustration of the changes that history brings about that whereas Hooker's great argument against the Puritans was to rebut their argument from the Bible that Church order was divinely and permanently revealed, it is now Hooker's High Church successors who plead for a divinely decreed Church order while the descendants of the Puritans reject it. And thus the whirligig of time brings on its revenges.

It seems clear then that although the Churches in England are coming closer together not merely in sympathy but in thought, fellowship and practice, yet complete union is at present out of sight. The first step should be towards inter-communion and federation. Inter-communion is already a reality between the different Free Churches and is occasionally practised by them with the Established Church. The peculiar difficulties of the Church of England, however, make such a practice inexpedient and for the time being more likely to place difficulties in the way of reunion than to help that cause. It is therefore an irregularity discouraged by the bishops. It will come about rather as a natural development than as a definite policy and will be the work of the Divine Spirit whether that Spirit acts through the common channels of Christian worship and fellowship or through decisions of Church councils and assemblies. Federation could be accepted as an immediate goal to be achieved by a definite policy. Much consideration would be necessary to show how the federation of all the churches in England would function as a stage towards complete reunion. The analogy of the relation of the monastic orders and the friars to the medieval Church might be a help in approaching this problem, though the differences between the twentieth-century situation and that of the thirteenth century are very great. Early Methodism has often been represented as a new order of friars which a wiser Church would have used and absorbed. The present day Methodist Church has very little resemblance either to Franciscans or Dominicans or any other order. At the moment it is struggling to solve a series of new problems created by its own recent effort to heal the divisions within its own borders. Nevertheless the knowledge deepens that the Spirit of God is bringing all these communions nearer and nearer to each other, ancient good has in many cases become uncouth, old distinctions are dying away and some practical advance towards closer fellowship seems possible.

A. W. HARRISON.

### PASCAL'S RENAISSANCE

LOVERS of Pascal will find much to interest them in Dorothy Eastwood's *Study of his relation to Modern French Thought*, just published by the Clarendon Press (12s. 6d.). Its title, *The Revival of Pascal*, is arresting and as we turn over its pages we wonder at the wide reading and the exceptional intellectual power of the volume. Miss Eastwood was born in Birkenhead in 1904 and when her father died a few days after her birth, her mother took her to live with relatives in Cheshire



and on their death moved to Colwyn Bay, where she spent the rest of her short life. When four years old she was crippled with an unusual form of arthritis and for ten years spent most of her time lying on her back in a hut or the garden. Between the ages of ten and seventeen she went very irregularly in the mornings to a small day school near her home. She taught herself to read and write and learned to read Greek, Latin, German and Italian with ease. Her exceptional intellectual power and her thorough knowledge of French won her in 1923 an entrance Scholarship in Modern Languages at Somerville College for which two County School mistresses had given her occasional coaching. Her illness increased at Oxford and it was only with difficulty and by heroic determination that she was able to attend lectures and avail herself of libraries. But her progress was such that she was awarded a Shaw Lefevre Scholarship in 1925, and in 1926 graduated with a First Class in the Honours School of Modern Languages and won a Gilchrist and a Goldsmith's Studentship.

She was now free to concentrate her studies on Pascal and to spend some time in France. In the intervals of painful and protracted attempts at a physical cure, she wrote the thesis, *The Revival of Pascal*, which earned her the Oxford degree of D. Phil. at the end of 1932. She was preparing it for the Press when she died in St. Bartholomew's Hospital at the age of thirty. Her friends felt that the publication of the study would be her best memorial and Professor Rudler, one of her examiners, has edited the volume with skilled and loving care. Dr. Rudler points out that the fortunes of Pascal in France towards the end of the last century went through a change so striking that it seemed miraculous or portentous. In 1885 a spiritualist philosophy of intuition took the place of the triumphant rationalism of French thought. But Pascal's *Pensées* would never have experienced such a resurrection save for their astonishing similarity to some part at least of pre-war thought in France. Bergson's first works preceded the crisis from which the *Pensées* emerged in a new light. The crisis lasted for more than thirty years. 'Pascal's depth as a thinker and mystic, and his holiness as a man, have been fully and finally vindicated, and the truth has been triumphantly confirmed that no writer can be understood save by one who thinks and feels like him.'

Edmond Scherer declared in 1858: 'L'apologie de Pascal a vieilli, vieilli tout entière.' But in the period from 1880 to his tercentenary in 1923 the *Pensées* 'from being regarded simply as a literary masterpiece, or as one of the most curious products of the human intellect, or as a record, precious indeed, of a great and intensely vivid personality, have come to be a living force in the consciousness of France and have been, as it were, resuscitated.' They are now triumphantly extolled for their supreme actuality.

Victor Cousin discovered the original manuscript in the Bibliothèque Royale in 1842 and demanded that the text should receive the same minute attention as was given to the authors of antiquity. He regarded the *Pensées* as a literary monument of purest French and as the supremely artistic expression of a great personality.



Vinet considered Pascal's intense individuality to be his leading characteristic. His interior activity, creative rather than receptive, gave him his freedom and courage in his quest of truth. 'Piety with him has the character of a passion, and it is in religion that he satisfies at last his thirst for Being and for Truth.' He really makes Pascal a Protestant. Later criticism has insisted on the historical, social, and dogmatic elements in his outlook, and has thereby added much to Vinet's interpretation, though not without detracting something from it. His chapter on Pascal's individuality still remains one of the jewels of criticism. Sainte-Beuve finds the source of Pascal's faith and work in his moral energy—a kind of passionate high-heartedness, expressed in disdain of the world, and a soaring sense of grandeur impelling him towards heights of purer and more intense humanity.

Droz regards Pascal as distinguished by passion rather than by strength; passion, pugnacity, pride, he holds, are his salient characteristics. Cousin thought Pascal a sceptic, who by attacking Cartesianism and through it all philosophy, rallies to the side of Jesuits and darkness. Droz represents the extreme of moral distaste which the *Pensées* aroused in his time; Cousin took the most unfavourable view of the philosophy. He regarded the sceptical attitude as the logical consequence of the Jansenist view of human nature as utterly corrupt in heart and mind, apart from the special influence of grace, incapable of truth. Havet in his great edition of the *Pensées* makes Jansenism the keystone of the arch. Jansenism reduced to the sole dogmas of the Fall and Grace is, he says, the whole of religion for Pascal. Father Longhayce conceives the character of Pascal as great, yet somewhat dark and hard, and holds that the *Pensées* are more likely to repel than attract the unbeliever by the grimness of their faith and their contempt for human nature, and breathe a spirit less Christian than pharisaical. Despite such opinions held during the reign of Science, Miss Eastwood feels that the *Pensées* 'remain what they were equally to Cousin and Sainte-Beuve, a supreme monument of French prose and the expression of a great personality—to all a subject of literary delight and perhaps of a rather morbid curiosity. The ardent spirit of Pascal, shining out against the darkness of his mental landscape, whether the effect produced were more sinister or effulgent, was infinitely fascinating.'

The Reaction against the reign of Science is traced and Poincaré's criticism of Science, compared with the Scepticism of Pascal. It is Pascal's scorn of mere groping and compromise and his courage in facing conclusions, however startling, which has gained for him the reputation of being a sceptic. The term is singularly inappropriate to one whose temperament, work, and life are all distinguished by a ringing strength of affirmation. The great mathematician's assertion that in our relative state all certitude is an illusion corresponds to Pascal's personal frustration as an aspect of the misery of man. Bergson's vindication of personality and the affirmative aspect of the *Pensées* are fully considered. Bergson's philosophy gave a new bent

and alacrity to the modern consciousness, 'communicating not only Pascal's antithetic vision but his sense of conflict; something of his high-strung effort, the striving, flame-like quality of his personal life.' Thus, thanks in part to M. Bergson, Pascal is tending to become the great leader of the century.

Brunetière held that there would never be a greater writer in the French language than Pascal, never one more worthy of our careful study, our passionate love, our deep respect. Father Laberthonnière's conversion was mainly due to the presentment of religion as a personal matter in the *Pensées* and he looks on Pascal's apologetic as marking a date in the development of Christian thought through the ages. His own writings on the subject have a singular charm to which a key may be found in his saying that Christian mystics think their life and live their thought.

Under the activity of modern critics Jansenism has vanished 'from its former place as the culmination of Pascal's thought, the solution of his antinomies, the keystone of his mental arch. And so the Apology of Pascal, despite its original association with a rigidly abstract and dogmatic school of thought, could now be extolled as experimental in method, and in its inspiration, essentially mystic.' That has led to new interest in Pascal as a mystic. The work of William James tended to remove from his 'temperament the stigma of mere morbidity: he no longer appears as the man of violent and conflicting extremes, his mysticism in almost painful contrast to his intellectual greatness; rather, both might now be said to have the same character of genius, both be thought to depend upon the activity of the subliminal self. A curious unity then penetrates his life and work.'

In the *Pensées* the 'style is the man.' It is largely by 'the union constantly maintained between the personal and the rational that this book, now admired and used with so much seriousness for the depth and vigour of its thought, has its place nevertheless among those purely literary masterpieces, which judged by the standards of art alone are acknowledged as supreme. From the same clash of conflict the man emerges heroic and the style poetic.' The striking association of exquisite finish with incompleteness adds to the quality of human and poetic grandeur which animates and envelops all its other appeals. The whole book is cast in the mould of a man's heart and intellect and makes many accepted elements in the thought of our own time stand forth as parts of one coherent vision and philosophy of life. It sets upon them as it were a confirming seal.

For him Jesus Christ is the corner stone. His pages on 'The Mystery of Jesus' search one's heart. Emile Boutroux says: 'All Christians, all men in fact, who can enter into the saying of the Apostle: "God is Love," to whatever Church belonging, find in Pascal a brother, in heart communion with whom they grow in goodness and piety.'

JOHN TELFORD.

## THIS WORLD WE LIVE IN

POETICAL imagination has often glimpsed reality and given a pleasurable and profitable interpretation of the world we see. In that interpretation the macroscopic as well as the microscopic world has had its influence. The thing that is seen is, to many, but a symbol of the unseen. Thus the flower in the crannied wall and the grain of sand on the sea-shore have suggested heaven and a universe. In consequence, Wordsworth's 'Peter Bell' has been recognized as a fitting rebuke to those who see the primrose 'and nothing more.' Here, a lack of seeing—an absence of imagination—is deplored. Just what the yellow primrose ought to stand for is not precisely stated, but it is inferred, it ought always to be recognized as a primrose plus. Yet it may be that those who see more than the primrose are hazy about their seeing and their imagination might be but a dream. An interpretation of the universe, therefore, is not merely a matter of imagination and dreaming. It is a matter of actuality and values. And it is just here where so many people are perplexed. There is so much that baffles the mind.

'Is there any sense, any direction, any purpose, in human life,' asks Phaedo of Socrates in Clifford Bax's play, *Socrates*. 'Or is the whole universe the result of a blind collision of atoms? How can I think there is any intelligent direction behind the life of the earth when lingering and atrocious diseases torture those who are kind-hearted and blameless, and when so many hypocrites and rascals prosper . . . ?'

And Socrates replies: ' . . . I do not think we can hope to catch the meaning of the universe.'

Actually, however, Phaedo and Socrates can be answered by both Christianity and science. Indeed, science is demonstrating what Christianity has by faith declared, that this world of ours is in the hands of God and that God is good. For the fact is, the macroscopic world is essentially something other than it seems. And reason itself indicates it, though faith is necessary for complete conviction. For what is the macroscopic world but matter plus 'formative genius'? This world in which we live, including the yellow primrose, is not just matter but matter plus. It is the result of creation and creation always needs, as the early Genesis account tells us, the moulding power of something, or someone, other than matter. As J. E. Boodin puts it in his *Three Interpretations of the Universe*: 'Creation means the transformation of an otherwise chaotic world into a thing of order and beauty. It is the shaping of an indifferent matter into a world of values.' And a world of values requires divine genius—God. It is this understanding of the world we see that makes possible the truth of the saying: 'Every bush is aflame with God.'

That the world was created by God all Christians believe. Just what are the implications of that belief, however, is not always under-

stood. Suffice it to say here—for we are not now concerned with the subtleties of metaphysics—that such a belief is both reasonable and justifiable. For science itself directs us to such a conception. The Christian has not, unfortunately, always seen how science could be a help to faith and this, maybe, has been due to an unwarrantable view of creation; that is, to a view of creation as having been begun and finished in long past aeons of time instead of regarding it as a continuous and constantly prevailing process. Now science has made clear that creation does go on and that in everything that exists there is something in addition to the existent or created thing—something plus. Thus if an electron and proton come together to create the atom, the outcome is not just the atom but the atom plus. To illustrate: when boiling water and tea come together we have not only brewed tea but brewed tea plus something else i.e. aroma. In the same way, the uniting of the electron and proton creates the atom plus what has come to be known as form and structure. Thus the world evolves.

The world we live in, however, is not only a world that evolves but, according to Physics, a world that progresses. There is not only process in the world, there is improvement. And this is true in spite of evil and 'inertia.' But the improvement is not superimposed; that would make improvement automatic and turn all entities into automatons. Rather it is an improvement which is in the nature of things and is due to choice, for choice has a place in the very constitution of the universe. That this choice is sometimes bad is, when applied to humans (though it is true of matter as well) only too obvious. Nevertheless, choice is there. So that we are not living in an alien, indifferent, static world; we are living in a world of adventure and enterprise. The universe itself is a great adventure but it is an adventure in creation. This realization ought to create in Christian people a very real delight in the world in which they live and an adoration and praise to God who is the creator of us all. For this world of ours, hampered by 'inertia' as it is, is nevertheless a world wherein there is an impulse toward improvement, toward an end and goal that shall be good.

The ground of such a conception is provided in the fact that, according to Physics, there is not only choice in the universe but a tendency to choose the higher and better thing. Or if not that, a 'willingness' to respond to the conditions of a higher life. Thus there is in the universe a constant creation of environment as well as the influence and pressure of such environment. And in all this there is a disposition toward that which makes for improvement and this is as true of humans as it is of what we regard as matter. There is, in both spheres, the seeking after or responsiveness towards organization in order to advance. And advancement here means improvement. Not only is it true that there is intelligent direction behind the universe but also that this is the significant meaning of the universe. Shakespeare glimpsed this truth in the words which speak of a divinity that shapes our ends, and Tennyson in the declaration that through the

world one increasing purpose runs. And to Physics we owe the recrudescence of such belief.

In the human sphere such a belief has special significance. It certainly makes true and prophetic the saying, made long ago by Mr. George Bernard Shaw: 'We are coming back to Christ in spite of ourselves.' For, although we know that there is a backward tendency in life, on the whole, life moves onward and upward. And this is the way we must look at the problem of evil and 'inertia.' Yes, and upon the problem of Phaedus which is the problem of so many.

The world we live in is God's world. It needed God to be created. The process and improvement of the world indicate Him. The goal of life demands Him. This is God's world.

T. W. BEVAN.

### NOVELS OF THE NAZI RÉGIME

IN the nineteenth century the literary achievements in Germany were very few. There were notable exceptions, of course, like Achim von Arnim's *Kronenwächter* and a book or two written by Eichendorff, but authors such as Gottfried Keller and E. T. A. Hoffmann were all great individualists, yet they had no influence on the general public.

The general revival in literature was influenced at first by Nordic and Russian writers, Jacobsen, Ibsen, Tolstoy and Strindberg, all of whom wrote straightforward prose narrative concerning ordinary men, but they had a revolutionary effect on the German mind and brought to light Friedrich Nietzsche, although he was more of a critic and educator than a philosopher. He induced agitation rather than contemplation. There now followed a break-through to reality portrayed by Heinrich Mann, Gerhart Hauptmann and Jacob Wassermann, these writers combined character with the truth of an experience, but then—the war.

The innumerable war novels had a great effect on the public, written with sincerity and passion their polemical value far exceeded their literary worth. But war-novel experiences of necessity bear a resemblance in whatever language they may be written, similar emotions are aroused, which, however, stirred the German readers to a much greater pitch than could be imagined by the phlegmatic Englishman. A late effect of the war makes us now anxious to understand our former enemies and we rightly think that by means of the novel we shall be able to do so. The modern German is at present in a self-explanatory mood, and since he has something to say it is obvious that the novel is a convenient way of saying it, although the political life and the incursion of the Marxist ideology have gravely trespassed where they are not wanted. The present Nazi desires through his novelists, to find out and clearly to set down what he is and what is his place in the world. There are in the newer authors signs that politics and public affairs can breed a passion susceptible of being expressed in a

satisfactory artistic form. The movement in this direction has hardly yet made itself obvious, but it is possible to foresee its trend.

In 1929 the German novel, on its stronger and more interesting side, performed the function of stock-taking, omitting, of course, those historical novels by which the new authors are best known in England. The vogue of this historical novel was led by *Jew Süss*, and it can be argued that the preoccupation with this type of book which we find to-day in so many German writers of distinction, is a consequence of recent events. It evinces a desire to recall the vistas of past history and to put the war in its proper place as no more than one episode among many.

Novels such as Döblin's *Alexanderplatz*, and Hermann Broch's *Sleep-walkers*, which incidentally were both influenced by Marcel Proust and James Joyce, spread great confusion and had no beneficial influence on the public, because they were psychological novels offered to a public which did not appreciate the uses of psychology. Their outstanding writer of this school is Franz Kafka, a Jew and yet a German in the widest sense. The majority of their modern novelists indeed are Jews—Stefan and Arnold Zweig, Lion Feuchtwanger and Josef Roth, whose works are genuine prose-poems and who ought to have a great future—and Jews were the intellectual pioneers, the first to do homage to Wagner, and to Nietzsche, the protagonists of every new art and doctrine. Their vital interest in literature during the last fifty years has been of great influence in Germany.

Alexander Henderson in his recent study of Aldous Huxley says, *inter alia*, 'The intellectuals with one voice denounced Hitlerism. The actual fascist doctrines of the Nazis many intellectuals would have approved, but it was the sight of stupidity being given power which infuriated them. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is fundamentally primitive, ignorant and uncultured. Followed by the spectacle of all the toughs in Germany doing as they pleased with European culture, it was too much.' This then is why no great achievement is in sight, but there is a certain collective striving for a new communal intellectual tradition which is nevertheless opposed to the spirit and essence of art and free characterization.

The genius of the people is not particularly adapted to the novel or short story. The Germany story on the whole is of a more distinctive type on general artistic grounds than the French or the English. Their range is narrow but there are few equals in the use of fairy tales, medieval legends and romanticism. Herr Frank states that his 'main interest is in the play of character on history and of history on character.' But he obscures his own views by vivid pictures of life in action, which is typical of his generation, which looks at subject-matter in the light of public affairs.

There is in Germany to-day no new interpretation of art or literature, there are individual writers who write large books and propound a new reading of history and life, but all remain purely individual. What is remarkable, though, is the increasing number of novels which are being translated into English, due to the efforts of Hauptmann



and Schnitzler who are earnestly striving to create a fundamentally German novel. They have no tradition upon which to work since before the twentieth century, literature was confined mainly to *belles lettres* and epic poems. They have a sympathetic hearing in America, which appears to take a lively interest in all Teutonic writings. But in their own country they have a hard task. The Hitler 'Jugend' do not want to be ordinary comfortable men, they want to be heroes, hence the impulsive vigour of the Nazi revolution. Comfort is proving insufficient for happiness.

There seems to be a peculiar abstention of young men from the pursuit of poetry, novels, drama and criticism, and the men who do practise the arts seem to be isolated from the rest of their generation. There is a predominance of political interests in every realm of German thought, which shares a faith which seems to make the achievement of world peace and the organization of world order of secondary importance.

T. R. GILBERT.

### BEETHOVEN, BACH AND MOROCCO

IN discussing books on Beethoven and Bach in one and the same article one is tempted to take sides, especially when each of the authors says that his subject is the greatest figure in music. A short while ago Beethoven was universally considered 'the general of the musicians,' to use the words of an unknown old lady on the occasion of his funeral, for which she deserves to figure in the B.B.C.'s series of imaginary biographies. To-day, in England, the consensus of opinion probably favours Bach. While Beethoven is over-criticized, we are perhaps a little uncritical of Bach and swallow him whole as the Victorians did Handel.

The title of M. Ernest Closson's book, *The Fleming in Beethoven*,<sup>1</sup> leads one to expect chauvinism, but one is agreeably disappointed. He is a Walloon, not a Fleming, and as such is an impartial observer. He does not 'entertain the absurd idea of claiming Beethoven as a Flemish genius.' 'Nationalism in art, a mean and contemptible spirit if ever there was one, is entirely foreign to my nature.' This is a trifle inconsistent with another statement that 'The creative artist is the product of a race, an epoch and a society, the psychology and ideals of which find their complete expression in his genius.' His thesis may be briefly put that while 'the Flemish origin of Ludwig van Beethoven has never been seriously questioned,' 'no one seems to have thought of drawing any inference as to its aesthetic consequence.' The contention that the Fleming in the grandfather came out in the grandson does explain certain idiosyncrasies of Beethoven's personality and work, and on the whole M. Closson does not drive his theory too far. When, however, he asks German critics to take into account this Flemish strain in Beethoven, ought not he himself to remember the influence

<sup>1</sup> Oxford University Press. 10s. 6d.

of a long residence in Spain upon Domenico Scarlatti, and not regard him solely as an Italian genius?

M. Herriot's *The Life and Times of Beethoven*<sup>1</sup> has come to England in an American dress, but is none the worse for that. One quickly grows accustomed to any peculiarity of spelling or phraseology, and appreciates the work of the translators, which is generally admirable. There is one passage, however, where they can only have misinterpreted the original. It is as follows: 'And Pleyel, also, composed quartets; but playing the second violin, Beethoven extemporaneously transformed a whole work, drawing from it melodies so compelling, harmonies so fascinating, that the venerable Ignaz bowed before the young master and kissed his hands.' What Beethoven did, of course, was to improvise from a second-violin *part*, which he had angrily snatched up and placed on the piano upside down.

The book is very much *the times*, and often tends to become a biography of Napoleon as well. Some may deprecate this, but it has the advantage of throwing into relief the personality of Beethoven. Notably is this so in the chapter dealing with *Fidelio*. By reminding us of the turmoil attendant upon the French occupation of Vienna during the first production of the work, M. Herriot is able to bring out, to its fullest degree, the solitary grandeur of Beethoven's genius.

It would seem that M. Herriot is not a trained musician, and so reads into the works extra-musical meanings. This is pardonable, for Beethoven was only prevented by Schindler from giving us such clues himself. But one wishes that M. Herriot had not, on one or two occasions, warned us not to do this, and then immediately proceeded to set a bad example. He makes an excellent point, however, in advocating that the three periods first designated by Wilhelm von Lenz should be set aside and Beethoven's work considered as one continuous developing whole. Yet here he is not consistent. Having dealt with *Fidelio*, he begins chapter vii with a paragraph that reads: 'There is a Greek word, the equivalent of which is not found in the French language—*ἀχμῆ*—that designates the greatest degree of maturation which a man and his talent can attain. This word applies exactly to Beethoven during the years 1808 and 1809.' But M. Herriot is aware of the importance of the Ninth Symphony, the Mass in D, and the last quartets, and therefore cannot think that Beethoven had reached the height of his powers at the end of 1809. He has made great use of the conversation books, and the work will thus be invaluable to those who cannot read German. There are also many little known details of the early reception of Beethoven's symphonies in France. M. Herriot has read a wide range of authorities, and it is pleasant to see that he has not overlooked the recollections of the English pianist and composer, Cipriani Potter.

Mr. A. E. F. Dickinson asks of the readers of *The Art of J. S. Bach*<sup>2</sup> practical endeavour. Reading on his first page 'that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of listening,' one might think that he was going to argue on the lines that Mr. John Gielgud, being an actor, necessarily under-

<sup>1</sup> Macmillan. 18s.

<sup>2</sup> Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

stands Shakespeare better than Mr. Dover Wilson, who merely studies him. What Mr. Dickinson expects is a combination of the two activities. He wants his readers to work through Bach at the keyboard, supplemented if possible by orchestral and choral experience, beginning with the solo works and passing on to the organ music, concertos, cantatas and larger choral works. To help them he has treated them categorically, which makes the book a little dull for the reviewer but extremely valuable to anyone undertaking the prescribed course.

He is a temperate Bach enthusiast, but occasionally makes statements about other composers that he would surely, one thinks, re-write on reflection. For instance: 'There remains Beethoven's Mass in D, with its magnificent symphonic fusion of thematic development and passionate incident, and its less magnificent and often hysterical reaches towards the sublime, notably in the finale of the *Credo*. It is in such reaches that Beethoven is apt to betray the *artificiality of his appeal*' (my italics). Every one would admit that Beethoven in this Mass did not entirely harmonize conception and execution, but does such failure necessarily 'betray the artificiality of his appeal'? Mr. Dickinson may mean that when Beethoven's fire burns low, the listener has to fall back upon technical or other interest. If so, no one will disagree with him, but his words certainly seem too sweeping.

To turn from these pillars of Western music to the music of Morocco is to pass from one extreme to the other. Musicians, nevertheless, should read Mr. Philip Thornton's *The Voice of Atlas*<sup>1</sup>. It is not so thorough a survey of the subject as Mr. A. H. Fox Strangways' *The Music of Hindostan* was, and the author has considered the weaker brethren by writing a narrative of travel full of picturesque, humorous and even sinister incident. He gives many musical examples and descriptions of dances and instruments, and if any of the readers of this Review are interested in the music used by other religions, they will find three specimens of Islamic chants, which Mr. Thornton collected in Tetuan, 'whilst secreted on the roof of a friendly Jewish electrician's house, overlooking the courtyard of a small mosque in the Ironworkers' quarter.' It is obvious that the music of the East is not mere noise: a professor at the Rabat Conservatoire of Music said that it took him sixteen years to become qualified to join a sultan's orchestra as a tahr player. Of some records of Western music those that appealed most to Moorish musicians were Bach's Italian Concerto, Corelli and Scarlatti ('very excellent rhythm and melody'), and Plain-song. Richard Strauss, Verdi and Wagner made them cover their ears in horror. 'Stravinsky cut no ice at all.'

To strike a pedantic but humorous note. The plural of octopus, Mr. Thornton, is either octopuses or octopodes, not octopi.

STANLEY A. BAYLISS.

<sup>1</sup> Maclehose. 8s. 6d.

## Ministers in Council

Further reports have come to hand of Study Circles since the account given of some last April.

**DARLINGTON CIRCLE.** This Circle has a membership of about twenty-four and holds its meetings on a Friday morning and afternoon once a quarter in the Y.M.C.A., Darlington. Last year the Rev. T. Robson, the Chairman of the District, initiated a series of morning studies of the Platonic Philosophy by a comprehensive and stimulating contribution. This year at the morning sessions the text book is Bradley's *Ethical Studies*. At the afternoon gatherings in the past Hattersley's *This Age of Plenty*, Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Bridge's *Testament of Beauty* have engaged attention. This season the Circle is concentrating on *The Poetical and Prose Works of Francis Thompson*. The secretary, the Rev. J. A. Cullum, speaks in high terms of the mental stimulus and rich fellowship afforded by these meetings.

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**GRIMSBY GROUP.** For some years a number of Methodist ministers in Grimsby and the locality have met for theological and related study. Last autumn, under the leadership of the Rev. W. L. Doughty, B.A., B.D., it was decided to consider together Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*. Various chapters have been discussed in the light of their message for the Church to-day. The Rev. H. Lee, the secretary, dealt with the Medieval Background, the Rev. A. I. Young summarized the contribution of the Continental Reformers, the Rev. H. G. Collinson reviewed the attitude of the Established Church to the Land Question and the Growth of Individualism in England. The secretary records that the group has repeatedly been led as a result of its deliberations to a renewed conviction that whilst the Church in its corporate capacity, as representative of a section of the community, may influence the Government of the day to correct economic irregularities, yet her task specifically is to help in the creation of Christian men and to stress the Christian ethic as having reference to the whole of life.

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**ST. HELENS GROUP.** The Rev. T. Hacking tells of the group which, gathered from a fairly wide area, has since 1932 been meeting in St. Helens. In the winter of 1932 the books for study were A. E. Taylor's *The Faith of a Moralist* and Walter Lipmann's *A Preface to Morals*. In 1933-4 Manson's *Teaching of Jesus* was taken in the mornings, whilst the afternoon discussions ranged over such topics as John Masfield, Christian Science, H. G. Wells' *Autobiography*, Browning's *The Ring and the Book*, and a Sketch of a United Church.

For the present year Kenneth E. Kirk's *The Vision of God* has been the morning theme. In the afternoons the syllabus has included a survey of Communism, Pacifism, the Cinema and the Church, Pool Betting, The Psychology of Conversion, and The New Book of Offices. The programme includes as a closing item a steamer trip in June round the Isle of Anglesey.

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THE MINISTRY OF CATECHISING. I am wondering if a custom of several years' standing which I recently observed in Lincolnshire in connexion with Sunday School work has many or indeed any parallels elsewhere. I had been asked to visit the Sleaford Northgate (W) Church one weekday to preach in the afternoon and speak at night under the auspices of the Circuit Sunday School Council. The circuit is a wide one, embracing a number of country causes. Yet, despite the distances involved and the time and expense of travel, I found both in the afternoon and at night companies of children and of teachers from a goodly proportion of the places. The scholars were devout and quiet worshippers at the afternoon service. Tea was afterwards served for them in the schoolroom. But it was the evening programme which to me was most impressive, and especially the item which read thus:

‘ORAL EXAMINATION OF SCHOLARS BY MR. H. GODFREY.’

The scholars were all ranged in rows in the gallery. To each was given a large cardboard number to be displayed on answering questions. Mr. Godfrey, a local schoolmaster and an enthusiast in religious work amongst young people, conducted with great skill a carefully prepared examination designed to test the scholars' knowledge of the Scripture lessons given in town and village Sunday Schools throughout the year. Full cognisance was taken of the Graded system and the questions were separately addressed to juniors and intermediates or seniors. Old Testament and New Testament portions were covered and also certain supplementary lessons on missionary work and on the League of Nations. The examiner stood in the pulpit. Behind him in the choir seats were certain teachers who noted and assessed each answer for prizes awarded before the meeting closed. With ease of approach and in winsome fashion Mr. Godfrey elicited from the scholars an unflinching response to his queries. To adult listeners it must have been a revelation of the varied instruction given in Biblical lore and also of the retentive memory of Methodist youth when well trained. Inevitably there stirred in one's mind reflections on the possibility of a still wider use and in other directions of the Catechetical Method. But of this an opportunity may be given to write later.

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BOOKS RECOMMENDED (1) ON SYNOPTIC GOSPELS:

In the last number of this Review it was suggested that we might be able to include in these columns from time to time a list of books which might be accepted as a guide to serious study. Dr. J. Alexander

Findlay of the Didsbury College has put many of us under debt by his own stimulating work in this field. We gratefully remember *The Realism of Jesus* with its paraphrase and exposition of the Sermon on the Mount. This has been happily followed by volumes on Matthew's Gospel, on The Teaching of Jesus, and on The Apostle Peter, and we look expectantly for much yet in book form from his pen, whilst meanwhile a wide circle peruse with keen interest his Answers to Correspondents in the *British Weekly*. Dr. Findlay has been kind enough to supply us with the following short annotated List of Books in English on a subject which he has made peculiarly his own:—

- Vincent Taylor: *The Gospels* (Epworth Press). A very lucid introduction to the scientific study of the subject.  
 B. H. Streeter: *The Four Gospels*. A Study of Origins, treating of the Manuscript Tradition, Sources, Authorship and Dates (Macmillan). Better on the first three than on the Fourth Gospel. Partly textual, partly critical, but exceedingly interesting and good.  
 F. C. Burkitt: *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (Cambridge University Press). Still, I think, the best critical and constructive introduction.

On the Subject-matter:

- C. H. Dodd: *The Parables of the Kingdom* (Nisbet).  
 Hoskyns and Davey: *The Riddle of the New Testament*. Both very suggestive books.  
 T. W. Manson: *The Teaching of Jesus*. More advanced. A really great book.  
 B. S. Easton: *Christ in the Gospels* (Scribner). Another great book.  
 Albert Schweitzer: *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (Black). Strong meat, but indispensable to those who want to understand the history of gospel study.  
 J. M. C. Crum: *The Original Jerusalem Gospel* (Constable). A picturesque exposition of the contents of 'Q'.  
 J. Moffatt: *Theology of the Gospels* (Duckworth).  
 R. Bultmann: *Jesus and the Word* (Ivor Nicholson). Advanced, but deeply moving.  
 B. W. Bacon: *The Story of Jesus* (Allen & Unwin). Provocative and stimulating.

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I shall be glad to receive further reports and also comments on any subject suitable for these columns.

10 Mainwaring Road,  
 Lincoln.

W. E. FARNDALÉ.



# Recent Literature

## THEOLOGY AND APOLOGETICS

*A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature.* By Martin Dibelius, Professor in the University of Heidelberg. (Ivor Nicholson & Watson. 5s.)

This is a translation of two little books which appeared ten years ago in the Sammlung Göschen under the title *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur*. It has been revised, and a short appendix refers to the Gospel fragment published last year by the British Museum. The name of Dr. Dibelius will suggest to most readers Form-criticism, for he it was who first prepared the way for that modern fashion in the study of the Gospels. We may almost say that this book is an introduction to the literature of the first Christian century from the standpoint of Form-criticism. As an introduction to the New Testament it would be quite inadequate, but for a brief introduction to early Christian writings in general it is a most stimulating book, and its best service will be to encourage many a young student to carry his reading beyond the canonical books of the New Testament to those known as the Apostolic Fathers. The range of this book is even wider, for it has much that is interesting to say about some of the apocryphal Gospels and Acts. Some idea of the contents may be gathered from the chapter headings. After an introductory chapter, the main headings are Gospels; Apocalypses; Letters; Treatises, Sermons, Tractates in Letter-form; Exhortations dealing with Ethics and Church Government; Public Worship; Histories of the Apostles. On many points we must express our dissent from positions taken up by Dr. Dibelius. Like most German scholars he seems suspicious of the South Galatian theory, and is unwilling to recognize in 2 Corinthians x-xiii part of the severe letter which Paul refers to in chapters i-ix. He also seems to us to fail altogether to recognize the very strong arguments for regarding Ephesians as Pauline. Here and there we have noticed what appear to be slips. Thus on p. 158 he seems to regard Gal. i. 21 as referring to Paul's First Missionary Journey, and on p. 115 there is an even more obscure sentence: 'However, after the fall of the Jewish Royal House in the time of Jesus, a new foreign power, that of the Romans, made itself felt with unjust violence.'

The translation is much better than that of Dr. Dibelius's earlier work, *From Tradition to Gospel*. But translation English is rather too much in evidence; e.g., 'epigonic' occurs several times, 'motivated' (p. 115), 'the history of religiousness' (p. 132). 'Pronunciation' (p. 102) should be 'pronouncement,' as on p. 121. On p. 123 'Ethiopian' should be 'Ethiopic' consistently. The translator might have spared us the word 'addressees' (p. 125), and that horrible pseudo-Latin

word *re* for 'about.' On p. 160 'the words of Peter' should be either 'words to Peter' or 'words about Peter.' Every reader of the commentaries which Professor Dibelius has contributed to Lietzmann's *Handbuch* knows what immense learning he brings to the study of the Pauline Epistles and to the Shepherd of Hermas. The discerning reader will see that behind these brightly written sections there lies a wealth of scholarship. The publishers are to be congratulated upon bringing so interesting a book within the reach of those who do not read German.

W. F. HOWARD.

*The Doctrine of the Word of God.* By Dr. Karl Barth, translated from the second German edition by Professor G. T. Thomson. (T. & T. Clark. 18s. net.)

Many English readers have been waiting for this authorized translation of the first volume of Barth's *Dogmatics*. Familiar with his general emphasis from his exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, they have wished to know how his thought would look when presented in some systematic form. Would the central conceptions remain? Would the violences of a fiery and prophetic spirit be toned down to the balanced calm of the philosophic expositor? Would the heat become light?

The English reader, unable to interpret with understanding Barth's German, will now be able to answer these questions for himself. Professor G. T. Thomson has translated this first half-volume on Church Dogmatics. To him the thanks of every Christian thinker over here are due. Only one conscious of a profound indebtedness to Barth would have toiled as the translator must have done. Dr. Thomson in his enthusiasm—he hazards the statement that 'the original is undoubtedly the greatest treatise on the Trinity since the Reformation'—suggests that if the book be but read slowly and digested the reader's 'difficulty' will vanish and the reward be great. It is doubtful, however, if all careful readers, even with the best will in the world, will be capable of 'digesting' Barth's thought. Judging from the violent discussions to which this has given rise, many both in this country and on the continent have had their tempers somewhat exacerbated by the process of intellectual digestion.

The Barth of the *Dogmatics* is the Barth of the *Romans*. Here again is the spirit of one who has been saying for twenty years or so that theology has for long lost its way. Schleiermacher is still the arch-enemy. 'Subjectivism' is still the central peril. 'Religion' is a quite different magnitude from 'revelation'; for 'one cannot speak of God simply by speaking of man in a loud voice.' 'A so-called natural knowledge of God' is but 'secular misery.'

This volume is devoted to *Prolegomena*, and is, Barth tells us, to be followed by another volume of the same size which will bring these *Prolegomena* to a close. Thereafter—'If God will and we are alive'—will appear volumes on the doctrine of God, the doctrine of Creation, the doctrine of Reconciliation, and the doctrine of Redemption.

The *Prolegomena* of Barth are not—as will be clear to every discerning student of this ‘desperado theology,’ as it has been called—what most philosophic theologians mean by *Prolegomena*. He has even—as he tells us—‘cut out in this second issue of the book everything that in the first issue might give the slightest appearance of giving to theology a basis, support, or even a mere justification in the way of existential philosophy.’ His *Prolegomena* have nothing in common with what we are accustomed to call Apologetics. ‘The necessity for dogmatic prolegomena, i.e., the necessity for giving an explicit account of the special path of knowledge to be trodden by dogmatics, must, to be authoritative, be an inner necessity, grounded in the thing itself.’ The first part of the book is concerned with ‘The Word of God as the Criterion of Dogmatics’; the second part of the book with ‘The Revelation of God as Triune.’ The whole is written from the standpoint that what Barth calls ‘evangelical dogmatics’ must go a different way from Roman Catholicism on the one hand and from what he calls ‘Protestantism Modernism’ on the other. By ‘Protestantism and Modernism’ he means the movement in theological thought to be traced through the line: Schleiermacher-Ritschl-Herrmann. (No British theologians are discussed by Barth: judging from this volume, they do not exist for him.)

This is no place to undertake an estimate of Barth’s theology. His concern for ‘the Word of God’ is, if he will only realize it, the concern of many who are unable to share the basal dualism—or sceptical dogmatism, as some might prefer to call it—of his thought, not to speak of the dialectic violence, vehemence and turpidity of his method of utterance. Often the reader will think, as he reads many of the polemical passages of this book, of the word spoken of old to one who thought that he, and he only, was left of those who were very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts: ‘yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal.’ If ‘one cannot speak of God simply by speaking of man in a loud voice,’ so neither does one speak of God simply by speaking of *Him* in a loud voice. No abiding service is done to the doctrine of Divine Transcendence by a stentorian repudiation of the validity of the ‘religious experience’ by which we know it. That way lies—not *Theology*—but the doctrine of An Unknowable X. Barth in one place quotes the familiar words of St. Ambrose: ‘Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum.’ We should all write better theology if we bore that utterance more steadily and firmly in mind.

C. J. WRIGHT.

*The Christian Idea of God.* By H. Maldwyn Hughes, D.D. (Duckworth. 5s.)

This volume belongs to the Duckworth Theology Series which has proved to be a veritable boon to theological students, teachers and preachers of all denominations. The publishers tell us that they feel that the time has come to bring the series up to date by the addition

of a number of volumes in which the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith are restated in the light of the latest developments in scholarship and thought. If this book may be regarded as typical of the series in its slightly reconstituted form, we may look forward with something more than ordinary interest to future publications.

Dr. Hughes arranges the treatment of his subject in eight chapters. He devotes the first chapter to a summary of the argument for Christian Theism, but since the book is not intended to be an essay in the philosophy of religion, no attempt is made to deal in detail with the many important points that are raised. The succeeding chapters are concerned with the nature and development of the Christian Idea of God. The 'Wholly-Other,' God manifest, the Sovereign-Fatherhood of God, the Grace of God, The Holy Trinity, Does God suffer? From beginning to end, the book is marked by clarity of thought and expression, careful scholarship, independence of judgement and a constructive aim. In a study of the Christian idea of God, it is inevitable and desirable that attention should be given to the history of doctrine, and those who so easily lose their way amid the maze of conflicting theories will welcome the author as their guide. While the book is not lacking in quotation from writers ancient and modern, Dr. Hughes does not follow the common custom of concealing his own views behind those of others. Take, for example, the chapter on the Trinity. After weighing critically the various theories that have been advanced, he leaves us in no manner of doubt as to his own position. 'The Godhead,' he declares in summing up his argument, 'consists of the Father and the Son whose personal indwelling in men is known as the Holy Spirit.' It would seem therefore that those are right who speak of the Holy Spirit 'as proceeding from the Father and the Son or from the Father through the Son.' On no fundamental issue does the author abstain from stating his own view.

One of the most interesting chapters in the work is entitled 'The Sovereign-Fatherhood of God.' Although the writer finds much of the teaching of the Barthian school stimulating and wholesome, he considers that it is a one-sided presentation of the Gospel which emphasizes the 'dissimilis' and is silent as to or denies the 'similis.' 'The Fatherhood of God has indeed often been presented in a sentimental way and there is a necessary and valuable corrective to this in the assertion of the Sovereignty of God—but not in the exclusive assertion of it. The whole truth is Sovereign-Fatherhood.' The perversions of the doctrine of divine Fatherhood can be safeguarded, we are reminded, if it is recognized that it is through the filial consciousness of Jesus, in whom the race is constituted, that we come to know God as Father. 'We are delivered from anthropomorphic error when we realize that God is such a Father as Jesus found and showed Him to be in his own filial consciousness and experience.'

Enough perhaps has been suggested to whet the appetite of the reader for a book that may justly be regarded as a notable contribution to Christian thought. We hope that it will enjoy the wide circulation which it so richly and obviously deserves.

HAROLD ROBERTS.

*Israel's Wisdom Literature : Its Bearing on Theology and the History of Religious Thought.* (The Kerr Lectures.)

By O. S. Ranken, B.D., D.Litt. (T. & T. Clark. 10s.)

Dr. Ranken deserves our sincere gratitude for his admirable lectures and learned contribution to Biblical scholarship, which, I am sure, will be of immense service to preachers and students alike. All who are interested in the origins of Judaism and Christianity, all searchers of comparative religion and systematic theology will find a good deal of material as well as inspiration in the pages of this book. After presenting in a lucid form the extent of the Hebrew wisdom literature, or as Dr. Ranken prefers to call it, 'the documents of Hebrew Humanism,' its growth and development, he covers a wide field of religious conceptions and theological doctrines, including the Jewish doctrine of God, Israel's belief in monotheism and universalism, ideas of reward and punishment, this world and a hereafter, resurrection and future life. The Hebrews came at a very early date of their history in contact with the then highly developed religious civilizations of Egypt and Babylonia, the Israelites watched and observed the religious life of the inhabitants of Canaan and of the Hittites, the Jews became acquainted with the religious systems flourishing in Iran and Greece, so that scholarly ingenuity and German industry found parallels to Biblical teachings and Jewish doctrines all over the world. Is it, one may ask, notwithstanding these similarities, right to deprive the religious genius of Israel, which produced Moses and the Prophets, Jesus and the Apostles, of all originality or religious ideas? Then, when conceding some elements of original religious thought, German professors discover or invent traces of an ancient Hebrew mythology, which are not warranted by our texts. If they ever existed, the religious purification done by sages and lawyers, prophets and psalmists must have been so thorough that not even the wildest imagination can adduce proofs for its favourite creations. Thus, for instance, when the theory is advanced that Jews in the fifth century B.C. believed in female deities. Or, that the laws in Numbers, chapter xxx about vows, were intended against certain fertility rites. Well, how shall one assume that a young lady under the age of twelve, or an old widow or divorced woman should indulge in such practices? Dr. Ranken trusts too much these and other German theories, although in a good many cases he sees the weakness and sometimes even the absurdity of such dreamy arguments. One would like to know the authority for the author's statement (p. 43) which sees in Celsus a Jewish scholar? I, further, would not call the Zohar 'a people's book' (p. 42) even if a popular writer does so. Even the English translation will not achieve popularity for such an obscure product of the medieval mind. The date of the book and its disputed origin rob it of all authority. The author's ideas about the date of the Festival called Simhath Torah, or Rejoicing of the Law, p. 205, surely need revision. In spite of these, and some other more minor mistakes, the work can be warmly recommended to serious readers.

A. MARMORSTEIN.

*The History and Religion of Israel.* By W. L. Wardle, M.A., D.D. (Oxford University Press (Humphrey Milford). 4s. 6d.)

This book is Volume I of the Old Testament series of the Clarendon Bible. It aims at giving the background of Hebrew history and religion and relating it to external life and thought. In this, Dr. Wardle has accomplished a difficult task with conspicuous success. He has produced in the small compass of two hundred and twenty pages an exceedingly competent survey of the main elements of the Old Testament, and in spite of the compressed nature of the information, the book remains most readable. Adequate advantage has been taken of the recent discoveries in archaeology, astronomy and geology. Much of the charm of the book is due to the masterly way in which this material is arranged to show its relation to canonical history. The relative importance of Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt and Persia is clearly shown and the true perspective is given of Israel as a puppet nation in an age of world empires. Many books have attempted to portray Israel in her true relation to the world, but few have succeeded as notably as this. One gains a new impression of the ancient world order.

The sections on details of historical periods and religious customs form an excellent text-book in themselves. Recent discoveries are continually cited as lending more light on difficult passages. The chapter on 'Israel's Origins' is particularly valuable. The historical treatment is straightforward and it is clearly shown that the ancient historian wrote to point a moral rather than to tell a story. This book emphasizes the essential religious nature of the Hebrew mind. The discussions of early Mosaic religion and the comparisons with the Decalogue are most able. The element of romance and folk-tale in the early Biblical narratives is clearly stated and parallels with external literature are shown. In this respect, it is a book of the age, and shows a new trend in the methods of senior religious education in our schools.

The arrangement of the work is excellent and the volume will reach a wide and varied public. Written as a text book for upper forms, it will be equally valuable to the young preacher, to whom it will serve as a reliable and interesting introduction to Old Testament study. It is the work of an authority who has the great gift of making his knowledge attractive. The volumes already published in this series will gain much by this introduction. The illustrations are as good as the text.

J. HENRY MARTIN.

*Jew and Greek: Tutors unto Christ.* By Prof. G. H. C. Macgregor and Prof. A. C. Purdy. (Ivor Nicholson & Watson. 5s.)

This excellent book deservedly leads the way in the new series, International Library of Christian Knowledge. It is the product of several years of happy colleagueship at Hartford Theological Seminary between two young scholars. One of them came back to succeed Prof. George Milligan at Glasgow University, the other remains at



his Alma Mater. Dr. Macgregor has written the introduction and the section of the Hellenistic background, and Dr. Purdy the section on the Jewish background. They have done their work so well that we confidently recommend this as the best book available for the ordinary student who wants a book of convenient size to supply him with that background of thought and history without which the New Testament cannot be rightly understood. Dr. Macgregor's introduction, 'The Historical and Political Background,' is written with real distinction of style. One of the good features of the book is that two experts have written each within the field of his special studies. In Dr. Glover's admirable book, *The World of the New Testament*, we know that we are in the hands of a supremely competent guide so long as the Hellenic and Roman worlds are being described. But when we come to the short chapter, *The Jew*, we feel that the treatment is inadequate. But Dr. Purdy has for long made this Jewish world the subject of his special research, and this gives to the present book a sense of balance which is often wanting in books of this character. Now and again we could wish that on some minor subject a little more first-hand study had been possible. Thus in the section on Mandaeism we should have welcomed the results of careful study of the *Ginza* and the other Mandaean books. We have a feeling that too much has been written on that subject in the last ten years that might have been modified had the quotations been studied in their original context. But this is a slight complaint. The book is worthy of the great seat of learning where it originated, and of the colleagues to whom the authors have dedicated it.

W. F. H.

*Concerning the Ministry.* By John Oman, D.D. (Student Christian Movement Press. 7s. 6d. net.)

Dr. J. Oman, former principal of Westminster College, Cambridge, is everywhere esteemed as a singularly penetrating and constructive thinker. These 'talks' (but what enriching conversation!) reveal him also as a true father in God. The author deprecates the personal note in his book. This, in our judgement, lends it added value. Many writers on the work of the ministry have sometimes seemed to darken counsel. Here is one who has a vital word to speak, not only to preachers on the threshold of their life-work, but even more to those in the middle years. Both are reminded here of the insidious perils that await the unwatchful minister. The book is a delight to read. Shrewd judgement on men and things, sunny humour, clear insight into the unchanging needs of the human heart, firm grasp of abiding spiritual principles are everywhere in evidence. Despite its admitted discursiveness the treatment covers most aspects of ministerial duty, as it relates to contact with life, men, and books. We have been specially impressed with the wise practical counsel given on such matters as speaking, writing, illustration &c. Some *obiter dicta* are memorable: 'an old Scottish professor used to say that there were three qualifications for the ministry—the grace of God, knowledge of the Scriptures in the sacred tongues, and

gumption'; 'concentration is far more important than time'; 'here is the difference between speaking with authorities and speaking with authority'; 'it was said that he (Blair) took so long to dress his sermons that they caught cold'; 'one of the greatest gifts in life is to be able to capture the bright moments, teach by them, learn from them, apply them, and then find them shining in the dull days brighter than before.' The book is a treasure of things new and old.

H. G. MEECHAM.

*Is Christianity Unique?* By Nichol Macnicol, D.D., D.Litt.  
(S.C.M. Press. 6s. net.)

There are various ways of answering the above question. One is to say No, and to treat Christianity as on a par with the other great religions, or at any rate only first amongst its equals. This is the way which commonly ends in some sort of celesticism, or perhaps in Theosophy. Another method is to regard Christianity as exclusive, and to base its originality upon what it denies, or at least does not accept, in other religions. The difficulty is then to say what is positively distinctive of Christianity. For so much in it has its counterpart elsewhere. The remaining procedure is to show that Christianity is the crown and consummation of the rest, a synthesis of what is best in them. This, on the whole, is Dr. Macnicol's mode of treatment, carried out with a fulness of knowledge and a generosity of temper which are admirable. Dr. Macnicol can repudiate what is incompatible with the genius of Christianity, especially all forms of negative pantheism or of mere transcendence. But in this he is merely negating negations. In general he is catholic to a fault and yet contrives to show that the religion in which he believes is a peculiar and original product of world-history. His book is the most satisfactory treatment, with which we are acquainted, of a complex and difficult question.

ATKINSON LEE.

*Vital Elements of Public Worship.* By J. Ernest Rattenbury, D.D. (Epworth Press. 5s. net.)

Every loyal Protestant should read this book. It comes 'direct and flamingly from the heart of a living man,' who has a passionate love for Methodism and whose extensive experience gives great authority to his views. It is unnecessary to repeat the summary of the contents, contained in the April number of this Review. The pleasant duty is left to me to point out some of the reasons for the study of this book and its subject at the present time. In the first place, the book surveys a realm in which Methodists have long been left without sure guidance. The first chapter gives a clear summary of the available information as to the origins of Christian worship, and the fifth contains a moving and devout commentary on the Order of Holy Communion. The criticism which Dr. Rattenbury directs at certain common practices in public worship should force many of us to reconsider the ruts in which we are at present moving. Secondly, the main thesis

of the book, that we must somehow seek to restore 'objectivity' to Protestant worship, is entirely in harmony with our authentic Methodist tradition. It is John Wesley who holds in balance the objective and subjective elements in worship. Mr. Bernard Manning has recently shewn how Charles Wesley exults in the contemplation of the saving truths of the Gospel, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, the descent of the Holy Spirit. Such is the chief of the remedies which Dr. Rattenbury proposes for the present poverty of our worship. Another is the provision for Holy Communion every week, and another, the definite observance of the recurring events of the Christian year. In the third place, this book is the work of one who is able to appreciate certain elements in Catholic worship without ceasing to be a stalwart Protestant. Dr. Rattenbury lays stress on the immense value of the Reformation contribution to objective Christian worship. He indicates how 'medieval childishness' has been expunged from the Order (still used by Methodists) of 1662. His appeal for the preaching of the Word is in the authentic language of prophetic Protestantism.

The more widely this book is read and pondered not only by ministers but by laymen, the richer and purer will worship become in our beloved Church.

R. NEWTON FLEW.

*Songs of Zion.* By Lionel James. (John Murray. 7s. 6d.)

For over thirty years vast numbers of people have read and profited by Lord Ernle's book, *The Psalms in Human Life*, truly a unique compilation of the historical instances in which famous men and women comforted themselves by quotations from these lyrics of the Old Testament. The work under review seeks to make this well-known anthology even more useful by bringing together text and commentary so that each faces the other on opposite pages: the reader has before him at a glance the psalm and the examples of its use in history. It cannot but be instructive and inspiring to see in what different circumstances and by what different persons a particular passage from the Psalter has been quoted. We are not surprised to find that no text in the Bible has played so large a part in Christian story as, for example, Ps. xxxi. 5. Besides rendering us this service Mr. James adds certain new features. In an Introduction he deals with such questions as the date, the authorship, and the social background of the Psalms. He then groups the Psalms according to their outstanding characteristic, classifying them as Nature, Historical, and Enemy Psalms, &c. He ends the series with other Old Testament lyrics like the Songs of Moses, of Ruth, and of Deborah. Indexes are given both of the first words of Psalms and of the quotations from Lord Ernle's book.

It is interesting to note incidentally that Mr. James condemns (p. 108) the singing of the Enemy Psalms in public worship; also that he is an ardent advocate (p. 211) for the reunion of the Churches. Much labour lies behind this very serviceable anthology, although the work involved has been obviously a labour of love. The author,

who has been a schoolmaster, intended this careful compilation primarily for Public School use; but he has elaborated the treatment of the theme so that it can minister to the needs of a much wider public. We conclude by heartily commending *Songs of Zion* to all spiritually minded people. It is eminently suitable for the purposes of religious meditation. As a book of reference it would prove especially valuable to teachers and preachers.

E. W. HIRST.

*The Gospel according to St. Matthew.* By F. W. Green, M.A. (Oxford University Press. 4s. 6d. net.)

This volume in the 'Clarendon Bible' has the usual features—the R. V. text with introduction and commentary. One test of a good Commentary is to read it through. In reading this from Preface to Appendix interest did not flag. There is evidence of competent, though not unbiased, scholarship. The date is placed late in the first century. This makes it possible to encounter an advanced ecclesiastical and sacerdotal system. Peter's Primacy is 'a very real thing': he is a monarchical bishop 'like S. Ignatius of Antioch.' On the Virgin Birth and the relations within the family at Nazareth, and, on another level, in a statement about the Temple-tax in relation to tithe, commentary slides into propaganda. The exposition follows a hint given by Papias but lost sight of until recently. The Gospel consists of five books after the pattern of the Mosaic Law Code. The format is that which is expected from the O.U.P. The illustrations are excellent; there is a useful appendix dealing with form-criticism; a detached note on the Kingdom of God is, among many others, of value, especially with regard to the possible institutional meaning of this term.

J. C. MANTRIPP.

*Hindu-Muslim Problem in India.* By Clifford Manshardt. (Allen & Unwin. 5s.)

This book is a serious attempt, by one who has made this problem a special study, to find a way out of a situation which has, so far, baffled the efforts of religious leaders and statesmen. The issues are squarely faced, and by a process of elimination the author fixes on the method of intelligent goodwill as the only feasible solution. Any one with an intimate knowledge of India, while acknowledging the absolute necessity of this approach to the problem knows that the cultivation of this goodwill will be a long and difficult task. Religion is a vital factor in the situation, but in Indian States like Mysore it has been shown that the two faiths can live and work together with a considerable measure of unity, and there are signs of a growing toleration in religious matters throughout the country. The political changes have greatly increased the existing bitterness, adding fuel to the fires of jealousy and distrust. The democratic principle, whereby numbers are the governing factor in the control of the State and in the distribution of offices, cannot be welcomed by the community which is in the minority, and the Muslims, who have

enjoyed power in the past by force of arms, in spite of being in the minority, see themselves in a position of perpetual inferiority. The writer in an able chapter, shows how this feeling expresses itself in the frequent clashes between the two faiths. The book is a real contribution to the understanding of this problem.

*The Fatherhood of God.* By W. B. Selbie, D.D. (Duckworth, 5s. net.)

With his praiseworthy thoroughness Dr. Selbie shows the need, which one was inclined to question, for this restatement of so central a Christian doctrine. As earlier Christian ages thought of God as Sovereign or Judge, modern theologians—like Rudolph Otto with his conception of the 'numinous,' and Karl Barth with his insistence on Divine Sovereignty—are again fixing a great gulf between God and man. In a timely chapter on 'Fatherhood and Worship' comes this striking sentence, where even Methodists should take heed: 'If God is our Father and if His grace is free, the whole case for what is called high sacramentarianism falls to the ground.' With other vital thinkers Dr. Selbie pleads for action as the true way of testing the doctrine of God's Fatherhood and its corollary the Brotherhood of Man. This is made challengingly plain in the chapter dealing with the Social Order. The book is a convincing refutation of many modern anti-christian movements.

FRANK FAIRFAX.

*God in Action.* By Karl Barth. (T. & T. Clark. 4s.)

Not so volcanic as *The Word of God and the Word of Man* translated eight years ago, the five addresses given in Paris and in Switzerland in 1934 and now collected by three Americans in this volume, are perhaps more easily readable. Barth, now professor in the University of Basel, is gravely alarmed by the secularization of the Christian Church in both its belief and practice. He therefore seeks, as the only potent remedy, to recall Christendom to a radical and thorough-going conception of the Scriptures as divine revelation, to be submissively received and reverently expounded. Every believer must become a witness announcing what he has personally heard of God's own testimony. The whole emphasis is away from Humanism and from subjection to aught that is mortal. The author points the moral by telling of a Japanese professor who stated that he had found wisdom's final conclusion by taking Karl Barth for his inner man and Karl Marx for his external! Here and there, Barth becomes autobiographical. His own experiences in Germany colour deeply his solemn warning to the Churches in England and America to beware lest their attachment to the State should lead them to the same contest with paganism that German Evangelicals are facing. After the fifth address is given an interesting and in part piquant account of a discussion which followed its delivery. A tonic quality in these pages repays the reader even when he disagrees.

W. E. FARNDAL.

## HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY, AND GENERAL

*Analecta Bollandiana.* Tomus LIII, Fasc. III et IV. Tomus LIV, Fasc. I et II. Bruxelles—Société des Bollandistes. Paris—Librairie Auguste Picard.

The grand design of collecting and editing the legends and histories of all the Saints in both the ancient martyrologies of the Eastern and Western Churches, and in the Calendar of the modern Church of Rome, was begun by a learned Jesuit at the end of the sixteenth century. At his death it was taken up by John van Bolland (1576-1665). Under his guidance a society of Jesuits (called Bollandists, after their leader) was formed to carry on the work. The learning and indefatigable industry of the Bollandists have become legendary. Not only have they produced some seventy huge folios (1,000 pages and double columns) of *Acta Sanctorum*, but also some fifty-four large volumes of *Analecta Bollandiana* (*analecta* = literary gleanings). The two latest of these collections of learned miscellanies have just appeared. It is probable that in English Protestant circles, there are really not many students of Hagiography and Liturgiology. Most of the articles in these volumes have interest only for the specialist. Nevertheless, there are several, such as that on The preaching of St. Bernard of Sienna, and a curious piece on 'Anciennes Litanies des Saints,' which are well worth reading by those generally interested in Church history. In each of these quarterly volumes there are some hundred pages devoted to reviews of recent books. English readers will be particularly drawn to the following—Hodgkin's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, Thompson's *Bede*, W. H. Frere's *Roman Lectionary*, Pierre Janelle's study of *Robert Southwell*, R. W. Chambers's admirable *Thomas More*, Miss Hitchcock's fine edition of the *Lyfe of Th. More* by W. Roper, Hughes's *S. John Fisher*, and Concannon's *Blessed Oliver Plunket*.

F. BROMPTON HARVEY.

*The New Culture in China.* By Lancelot Forster. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

We have read many books on China, old and new, and began this volume with languid interest, we read on with growing pleasure and on finishing recommend it as a really valuable and most illuminating picture of the national life of the farthest East. The author is Professor of Education in Hong Kong University and has evidently not been content to stand at the Gates but has gained intimate interior knowledge. The irritant cause of the Chinese Revolution was the Western education of many young Chinese in Europe but specially in the United States. What they saw there revealed to them their own country's backwardness. There sprang up a vivid



sense of the value of a scientific education, and there resulted an exaggerated revolt from the fourfold Confucian classical lore on which their governing class had been educated for a couple of thousand years. In 1911 the foreign Manchu dynasty was quietly dis-throned; in 1926 Confucius was burnt in straw effigy at Chang Sha. This was because he preached loyalty to the Emperor as representative of Heaven. In 1934 the nation once more celebrated the birthday of Confucius. They cannot get away from the fact that the primary aim of education must be the realization of goodness within the community. Thus there is a strong tendency to a purely materialistic view of life and Bertrand Russell was warmly welcomed on a visiting tour. But there is also a new hesitancy that looks longingly back on the moral. The Manchus did not oppress, they governed through the Chinese and were themselves conquered by the Chinese literature and religion. Now the emergence of the sectional military adventurers has led to internal chaos and external weakness. The many virtues of the Chinese race deserve good government—and this is just what they cannot get. Happily, prospects are brightening.

The young educated class, with Professor Hu Shih at their head, have restored the spoken tongue to dignity by writing books in Mandarin. Our author has not given the due meed of credit to the Christian missionaries, who anticipated these young patriots and had already familiarized the Chinese multitude by a Bible in this tongue and a not inconsiderable literature, journalistic and permanent. Here, as long ago in England and Germany and recently in barbarous lands, the coming of the Christian Bible has given new dignity to the language of the common people. That same Book prepared the way for Hu Shih and his company. And the modern China movement is full of enthusiasm for the *many* contrasted with the *few*. There has sprung up a great attempt to produce a simpler literature. The beautiful but infinitely complicated Chinese script is being simplified. The thousand simplest characters are being taught in many voluntary night-schools where chair-coolies sit by little boys, working men by shop assistants, old and young and middle-aged together, the work being all gratis. A whole small literature is growing up to reach this need. The Christian Church is taking its share in this as in every other section of the national life. We have heard it stated that *the* regions where this popular education of the million really lasts over the first spirit of enthusiasm is where the Y.M.C.A. or other Christian agencies produce the voluntary workers.

In this seething cauldron of new ideas we see the oldest civilization of the world. The love of the many, the uplift of the lowest may inspire Communistic vigour, but may we end by quoting Chiang Kai Shek, the present Head of the Chinese government. A few years ago he became a Christian. The one force he feared was Communism. Said he: 'Communism owes its strength to its missionary fervour. The only way to combat it is by a stronger missionary fervour. I have had a Christian wife and mother-in-law,

and I know that only Christianity can provide that.' China's extremity is the Church's opportunity. The hour is critical. The hesitations of this great Nation claim and deserve the sympathetic help of the Christian West.

W. T. A. BARBER.

*Mohammed, The Man and His Faith.* By Tor Andrae.  
(Allen & Unwin. 8s. 6d.)

Dr. Andrae's work on Islam is better known on the Continent than in this country. He has published a number of books on this subject since 1918 which are the result of much diligent research in Islamic and contemporary Arabic literature. In another sphere, his *Psychology of Mysticism* is a classic work.

In the present volume he has given us a study of Mohammed the man rather than a history of Islam. The treatment is without bias, simple in style and avoids technical terms. This makes the book eminently suitable for the general reader. The inconsistencies and objectionable features of the Prophet's character are recognized and the moral problems thereby raised are freely discussed. The sword as the tool of the early Islam missionaries is emphasized. Dr. Andrae seeks to relate Islam to Judaism and Christianity and in so doing endeavours to make Christian readers approach the study with unbiased minds. He stresses the Eastern point of view throughout and his knowledge of Arab life and customs makes this effective. The compelling nature of Mohammed's faith is brought into prominence and the inscrutable will of Allah is the determining factor in all the Prophet's actions and oracles. Most of the facts are gathered from psychological exegesis of extracts from the Koran which is freely quoted. The author maintains that this is the final authority for the study of Mohammed and Islam. To him the Koran is central and his interpretation may be summarized in the statement, 'Mohammed's conception of scripture is dynamic not static.' This involves a discussion of the Prophet's doctrine of revelation, which occupies a whole chapter. Mohammed is said to have seen in the Jewish hope of a Messiah and Jesus' promise of the Comforter a support of his own conviction of a divine call.

One feels, however, that it is unnecessary to account for Mohammed's theory of revelation by long speculative discussions on Gnostic, Ebionite and Manichean doctrines of Christ. This appears to be a common trait in recent German theological literature. On the other hand the thoroughness with which the book is written makes it well worth careful study. The book is not an exhaustive study of the history of Mohammed or of Islam but it does help to an understanding of Islam. The writer is a psychologist first and a historian second as is shown by the analysis of Mohammed's call and prophetic consciousness. The English translation has been effectively made by Theophil Menzel. He has captured the English idiom and made his work easy to read. The success which will come

to this book will be due in large measure to the work of the translator. It is interesting to note that translations into Spanish and Italian have already appeared.

J. HENRY MARTIN.

*A History of Religion in the Old Testament.* By Max Loehr, (Ivor Nicholson & Watson. 5s.)

This volume is one of a new series projected by the publishers under the title 'International Library of Christian Knowledge.' Its author, who is a professor at the University of Königsberg, after some preliminary introductory matter, gives an outline—which is no mere skeleton—of the Hebrew religion in three parts, devoted respectively to the nomadic period, the period of the settlement in Canaan, and the Jewish period. We are glad to see that Professor Loehr attributes so much to the work of Moses, and traces the higher religion back to his times. There is due recognition of the danger of dogmatism about details, but the author gives us a considered view instead of a choice between conflicting hypotheses. In the later parts of the book there is, perhaps, a tendency in some cases to state as a fact what is only a reasonable view. For example, we read that 'It is certain that we must regard the "Servant of Jahweh" as a single person'—a highly questionable statement, the more surprising because in the immediately preceding context we are told that 'no certain conclusions have yet been arrived at in regard to . . . the question who was intended by the Servant of Jahweh.' The theory of corporate personality applied by Eissfeldt in so illuminating a fashion to this problem is ignored. It is a pity, too, that attention has not been given to the plausible argument which would reverse the chronological order of Ezra and Nehemiah. It is hardly correct, moreover, to describe Amos as a 'cattleman,' and the rendering on p. 80, 'runs his hand along the wall,' hardly does justice to the original. But these are small blemishes in an excellent reconstruction. We wish it were possible to commend equally the work of the translator. Unfortunately the translation is very badly done; sometimes only 'English' by courtesy, and often leaves one guessing at the author's meaning. One would surmise that 'delivered himself from' on p. 156 really should have been 'delivered himself over to,' a very different thing. Nor would an English sentence begin with 'There is not doubt that that was' as on p. 162. The fact that 'ecstasy' is spelled indifferently as it should be and as 'ecstasy' is indicative of the careless style. Despite this, however, the book, which in other ways is well produced, is worth adding to the ministerial bookshelf.

W. L. WARDLE.

*Lucretius, Poet and Philosopher.* By E. E. Sikes. (Cambridge Press. 7s. 6d.)

In this scholarly and exceedingly well-written book the President of St. John's College, Cambridge, discusses the genius and art of

Lucretius, as well as his version of Epicureanism. He claims and proves his claim—that Lucretius can be classed only with Homer and Sophocles, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton, for he has all the marks of supreme and sustained greatness. Mr. Sikes' comparison of Lucretius with Wordsworth is even more interesting; classical scholars will admire his rendering of 'The world is too much with us' into Lucretian hexameters which, with a passage from the 'Prelude' and from Matthew Arnold similarly treated, he appends to the book. 'Wordsworth was a pantheist, Lucretius practically, if not philosophically, an atheist, but poetry is an expression of an attitude, not a mere matter of creed.' The book contains also a chapter on the life of Lucretius—Mr. Sikes discounts the legend of his suicide—and discussion of Epicurean theology. It ends with an interesting chapter on 'Lucretius and modern thought.' The atom has been successfully broken, and with its dissolution Lucretian atomism, which satisfied Newton, has been antiquated, but the poet's anthropology has stood the test of time. The book as a whole is a monument of Cambridge scholarship, unpretentious, lucid, and accurate; it is packed with thought and learning lightly carried, but its style is so limpid that it is exceedingly easy to read.

J. A. FINDLAY.

*The Man of Anathoth.* By W. Riley. (Herbert Jenkins. 7s. 6d. net.)

There are many who look forward to the announcement of a new story from W. Riley, but this will be an unexpected theme for some who admire his stories and know him as the lover of the Yorkshire Moors and dales. Yet perhaps not surprising to those who know him more intimately as the delightful personality highly appreciated as a Methodist local preacher. Only a devout student of the Holy Scriptures could have undertaken the task set by the writing of this book with any hope of success. And only one possessed of admiration for the character of Jeremiah could possibly produce a story with any sort of popular appeal. The purpose of the story as conceived in this depiction is 'a great desire that others besides students should know and appreciate Jeremiah.' To this end, as the author freely declares, there has had to be a vivid use of the novelist's imagination and a long journey into 'the region of conjecture.' But the difficult task has been accomplished in the production of an easy sense of wholeness in the picture produced of the prophet's long and desperate ministry. The great advantage of ample personal material lying at hand has been used to full advantage. And the greatest of the prophets stands out a lonely and tragic figure, majestic in his courage and complete in his utter reliance upon God. By a skilful use of the words of prophecy his love and tenderness emerge, as also his wrath. And the great contribution of Jeremiah to the history of Religion, its personal aspect and relationship, stands out in the story in the prophet's own fellowship with God.

The book is not a commentary, but simply sets out to tell the story, and a remarkably well-knitted story it is, out of a book so bewildering in its arrangement or lack of arrangement. And the final result should be a considerable fulfilment of the author's desire, that many should come to know this great and good man Jeremiah.

W. G. THORNAL BAKER.

*Carey.* By S. Pearce Carey, M.A. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott. 1s.)

This book is written in connexion with the Carey centenary celebrations and is an extensive corollary to an earlier work on the same subject by this author. Recent estimates of Carey's work both British and Indian are incorporated here by the missionary's great-grandson. The book gives a brief, vivid record of a daring missionary, who overcame the inertia of the Church at home and the opposition of the government abroad. Domestic tragedy, official suspicion and storm ravaged premises seemed to energize and develop his faith.

Carey founded the first Indian Christian college and envisaged decennial missionary conferences, with the zeal of a pioneer and the vision of a missionary statesman. This book lays emphasis on Carey's linguistic work and translations of the Scriptures. His Sanskrit New Testament has been the basis of similar and subsequent work in many Indian dialects and its importance cannot be overestimated. In translation work Carey forged the tool that has accomplished so much in the evangelization of India. The book is written in a conversational style which is both its charm and defect. Grammatical accuracy has been occasionally sacrificed in an endeavour to make attractive reading. The excessive use of Biblical phrases rather palls on the reader and it would have been better to have divided the story into chapters. Despite these blemishes the writer has produced a good account, within the limits of his space, of his illustrious forebear.

*Boxer, and other China Memories.* By Frederick Brown, O.E.C., F.R.G.S. (Stockwell. 2s. 6d.)

Rev. Frederick Brown is a veteran Methodist missionary who served in China from 1882 to 1913. During that time he was in perils oft and conquests many. In 1900 the Boxer rebellion broke out in the district of which he was chairman and he is best known by the conspicuous services he rendered in the relief of Peking. This book is a medley of biography, history and travel. Reminiscences of the stirring days long ago are linked up to several chapters of personal happenings. Those who know 'Legation Brown'—and they are legion—will be interested in his memories and others may find it profitable to recall the China of the years before the Great War when the Chinese republic was an unrealized dream.

*The Scofield Reference Bible.* (Oxford University Press. 6s.)

The issue of the Scofield Reference Bible in fine clear minion type at a cost of six shillings is a high achievement in publishing. The value of the scholarly work of Dr. C. I. Scofield and his eminent assistants is generally recognized and now is available for all. The references are connected and topical, and will prove supremely useful to every minister. The marginal renderings make for clarity in understanding and the explanations of seeming discrepancies in the text are well founded. The introductions to the various books are masterly epitomes of their contents, while the indexes of the editorial matter and the atlas are full and accurate. The panoramic survey of the Bible provides matter for an excellent series of addresses. The version used is the Authorized. The new paragraph arrangement with italicized headings will facilitate study and make the Bible its own best commentary. We congratulate all who have laboured to make this book so well, so cheap and so scholarly.

*The Lure of Freemasonry.* By W. Bro. Rev. Joseph Johnson, Past Asst. Grand Chaplain. (The Masonic Record Ltd. 5s.)

This is a frank statement in popular language which will interest and help many readers. The author says: 'Freemasonry is not a religion in the ecclesiastical or theological sense. It creates no church, administers no ordinances and has no ministerial or sacerdotal class. It is an ally of religion—but is in no sense a substitute for it.' He sets out to prove that the purpose of Freemasonry is the preparation, education and training of its members for the higher social relationship. In the course of his exposition he enunciates the three great principles of Freemasonry as Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Whatever one's reaction to this historic movement may be, such a book as Mr. Johnson has written will give one authoritative information on which to base one's conclusions. The fact that the writer approaches the subject with the knowledge of experience and the sincerity of a devoted Christian makes it more convincing.

*For Parsons Only.* By T. S. Taylor, M.A., B.Litt. (Allenson. 3s. 6d.)

The cover paper of this book informs us that it is 'keeping the midnight oil burning in many a study,' and the contents assume that it is midnight in the life and thought of the minister. Failure is everywhere, and criticism abounds, though one can be cheered by the fact that the funeral furnishers of the Church have not yet received the order for the interment. They have forgotten that the Church of many faults is still the Church of the Living God. This volume makes challenging reading for the office of the ministry tends to more office and less ministry. We want a book that will stimulate the morning watch rather than burn the midnight oil. It may be that the Church is coming to a crisis but it always has been that the call to-day is the call



of every age 'to keep faith.' In this the author, as he closes, makes a sound appeal. Religion is not alone in its danger of rationalization (blessed word), it is the common feature of twentieth century existence and our prophetic ministry must discover afresh the mind of God. There have been ministers in every age who have forsaken the main issue for the sidelines of politics, social service and latterly psychology. They are very vocal but there is a quiet faith in multitudes of hearts. This book may overrate its own contentions but it sincerely warns us of what the author conceives as a peril.

*The Renewing Gospel.* By Walter Russell Bowie. (Scribners, 6s.)

The 1935 Yale Lectures on Preaching. There is pathetic faith that preaching can be taught, the witness to this is innumerable books on preaching. Here there is more about the preacher's audience and his message for the modern world, topics not usually treated in books of this sort. It is wisely insisted that a preacher must be himself, aiming at becoming all he is capable of being in the service of man for the glory of God, inspired by the magnificence of the message of grace given in Jesus Christ.

*A New Pulpit Manual.* By James Burns. (James Clarke & Co. 2s. 6d. net.)

This is a comprehensive manual of over 200 well-printed pages. It is an excellently produced little volume and a really wonderful half-crown's worth. It is rich in material coloured by the great liturgies of the past adapted in thought and form to modern use. All the many special occasions are provided for: Armistice, Empire, Peace Sundays, as also the dedication of memorial windows, organs, and the laying of foundation stones. There is a concise but sufficient service for Holy Communion, Marriage and Burial. This is altogether a most admirable compilation, and will prove useful for helpful suggestions even to those who have their own forms for special occasions.

*Objective Evolution.* By C. Pleydell-Bouverie. (Williams & Norgate 7s. 6d.)

This book ranges from political evolution to economic equations, from man's intuitional life to consideration of a 'Consumers' Monetary Expansion,' from cosmic advance to a series of judgements concerning the European situation; and the way is very tortuous. The writer believes that psychological evolution and 'cosmic emancipation' are bound up with economic prosperity and that spiritual evolution is a matter of political concern. All sciences point to a unity and, indeed, all life is a unity. The material world has, in consequence, its effect upon man's spiritual and psychological life.

T. W. B.

# Periodical Literature

## BRITISH

**Hibbert Journal** (April).—‘Europe’s need for a new Political Philosophy’ is a contribution of outstanding merit by Dr. Mowat in which he reviews the political faith of Europe before and since the War, and discusses the conflict between the democratic principle of government and the new nationalism. Out of this struggle two new faiths contend for supremacy, neo-nationalism and internationalism. All the teaching of Christianity is on the side of the international solution of the world’s problems, as also, it is contended, are the majority of the statesmen of Europe, and the philosophers, whether they belong to the Christian communion or not. ‘Ought we to fight for our country in the next war?’ by the professor of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge, is a useful example of explosive writing, calculated to greatly increase the number of pacifists. Professor Broad thinks the death-penalty ought to be imposed on those who refuse to undertake military or other war-service. His jibe about suicide and the gas-oven, as a way out for those who will not fight, is unworthy of a place in the Journal. C. E. M. Joad has an interesting analysis of experiments in Telepathy, and is inclined to the view that here we have the evolution of a new faculty. Alfred Loisey gives a trenchant reply to P. L. Couchoud’s ‘Is Marcion’s Gospel one of the Synoptics?’ In it he describes Couchoud’s conclusions as devoid of any foundation, having the substance of a castle built in the air. In ‘Nietzsche and the present Crisis of Civilisation’ Professor Lichtenberger attempts to show how many are the errors current in regard to his teaching; and these by those claiming him as their prophet. ‘What the Scientists Forget,’ by Dr. Butterworth, needed saying, only much more so. ‘How funds for good causes were raised in the Middle Ages,’ by Lilian G. Ping, will be read with interest. There is high praise in a three page appreciation of Dr. J. Alexander Findlay’s *A Portrait of Peter*. No fewer than four of the articles are replies to articles appearing in the January number of the Journal.

**The Expository Times**.—In the current volume (No. xlvii) three veins of study are being worked. They concern Modern Theology, Old Testament Ideas of Religion and Christian Social Service. In February, Prof. Fulton of Glasgow wrote on ‘Divine Personality’ and examined his subject from the points of view of philosophy and of religion, affirming that finiteness does not belong to the essence of personality. God is super-personal, not impersonal. The Psalmists and Prophets did not hesitate to use the language of anthropomorphism; they prepared us to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In March Prof. C. R. North of Handsworth College made a scholarly examination—the fifth in the series—of Sacrifice as an outstanding

problem in the Old Testament. He turns a critical eye on the statement that the Prophets condemned sacrifice as such. It was the practice as they knew it against which they protested. The idea at the heart of sacrifice is both expiation and offering, and the Jewish system as developed in post-Deuteronomic religion, is a preparatio evangelica for the New Testament teaching about the Cross. This is an article to be pondered. In the April issue there is an article (No. 6 in the series) on 'Students' Contribution towards a New Economic Order' by Edwin Barker of the S.C.M. It covers too wide a field for detailed summary here; suffice it to say that no minister is fully awake who does not know something of the activities and influence of the Student Christian Movement in this and other lands. Here is a source of fascinating information.—There are other articles in these numbers of great interest, and the Magazine grows in usefulness to the scholar and the pastor. The book reviews (*e.g.*, of Dr. Maltby's latest) are very useful.

**The Journal of Theological Studies** (April).—This number opens with an article by Dr. Clement C. J. Webb on 'Nature and Grace,' which was originally written as a contribution to a discussion on 'Community, Church and State' in connexion with the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work. There are some learned contributions under Notes and Studies, of which those of most general interest are one by Mr. H. F. D. Sparkes on 'The Partiality of Luke for "Three,"' and its bearing on the original of "Q,"' and one by Prof. R. V. G. Tasker on the Text of the Fourth Gospel used by Origen in his Commentary on John. As usual there are many excellent reviews. Amongst these we call attention to one by the late Canon Nairne dealing with Grube's *Plato's Thought* and E. R. Dodds's *Proclus*, to Dr. B. J. Kidd's review of Dr. Homes Dudden's *Life and Times of St. Ambrose*, and to two of special interest to Methodists: a group of critiques by Dr. Newton Flew, and a notice of Dr. Hirst's Fernley-Hartley Lecture by Prof. H. H. Farmer.

**The Congregational Quarterly** (April).—This issue contains excellent articles. In 'Mysticism and the New Testament' Edward Grubb says that a Christianity that lays chief emphasis on correctness of doctrine does not meet the need. 'The Christianity of Paul and John goes behind most of the controversies that keep men apart, into a region where they need hardly begin.' Dr. Howard Chandler Robbins on 'Edwin Arlington Robinson' pays tribute to the poet's spiritual detachment and claims that 'classic' is the obvious term to characterize Robinson's more important works. A timely article on 'The Priesthood of Believers' by Wilfrid Harper draws attention to the danger of forgetting or ignoring the fact that the 'ministry' and the 'laity' form a common priesthood unto God. J. S. Hoyland writes on 'Reconciliation by Pick and Shovel' and Dr. W. W. Willard 'On Belonging' holds that adjustment of parts to each other and to the

Living Whole is life's central challenge and achievement. In a centenary article on 'William Godwin—Sentimentalist' D. S. Johns revalues a much misunderstood philosopher. Other features include 'Developments and Experiments,' 'On Life and Books' by the Editor, 'Impressions of a European Theological Students' Conference,' 'Foreign Reviews,' 'Current Literature' and 'Shorter Notices.'

**International Review of Missions** (Quarterly).—**Religion in Life** (Quarterly).—The April issue of the *International Review of Missions* is a mine of overseas information in which work will be richly repaid. 'The Care of the Convert' is an article which should be read by every minister everywhere. The problem there discussed is universal and the findings therein will help all. The story of the Indian National Missionary Society is an inspiring one and shows the best way to the evangelization of the native races. All the contributions are on a high level and will repay careful reading.

Our distinguished contemporary, *Religion in Life*, is worldwide in its authorship and significant in its matter. Each succeeding number brings to the reader a wider horizon of thought, a deeper passion for souls and a larger equipment for work. The spring issue has three important articles by English scholars, Dr. Newton Flew, Dr. J. A. Findlay and Dr. H. W. Robinson, and twelve contributions by outstanding American writers. Every page is worthy of attention and the whole provides a storehouse of virile modern scholarship.

**The Moslem World** (April).—In an introductory article on 'Our Evangel and Islam,' the Editor, Dr. Samuel Zwemer, calls attention to the use of the New Testament word 'evangel' in the Arabic Koran and the religious vocabulary of all Moslems. Mohammed had high praise for the message (INJIL) of Jesus but the real content of it neither he nor his followers ever accepted. On the contrary, the Christian missionary is regarded less as a bearer of good tidings than a messenger of bad news. Professor Margoliouth is quoted at length in explanation of this strange contradiction. The question of secret discipleship is handled vigorously by Dr. H. E. Phillips who makes an urgent plea for open confession and public baptism on the part of Moslem converts to Christianity, however costly the consequences. Those familiar with the writings of Dr. Frank Hugh Foster will regret to learn of his death at 84, but readers will revel in the posthumous contribution from his pen entitled, 'An auto-biography of Mohammed.' With material drawn entirely from the Koran there is presented a unique portrait of the 'Prophet.' The writer has displayed shrewd insight and judgement in estimating the character and methods of the founder of the Moslem faith. Textual questions are dealt with in an interesting manner by Rev. Eric Bishop who discusses the problems of a new version of the Arabic New Testament. An article on 'Slave Girls in Morocco' gives us a glimpse of a social order that happily is gradually disappearing.

## AMERICAN

**Harvard Theological Review.**—In the January number Dr. Moffatt's brilliant article on 'The Approach to Ignatius' begins by luminously summarizing the results of recent studies of the Bishop of Antioch. His main contention is that 'literary criticism has something to contribute to modern research into the foreground and the background of the epistles.' The Trallian letter is chosen 'with a view to indicate the benefits of re-setting the text, also by translating it to suggest that the Greek of Ignatius requires to be read in the light of contemporary Hellenistic usages.' Dr. Moffatt not only gives a new translation but also accompanies it by instructive notes on the phraseology, as *e.g.*, when he says that 'the exact force of  $\xi\eta\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  (in iv) is not suggested by a rendering like "jealousy"; it denotes rather the special temptation of the writer as he feels irritated by opposition as well as unduly susceptible to admiration.' A most informing study closes by showing how the Trallian letter 'thus re-set, illustrates several of the idiosyncrasies that vein the writer's character.' Three scholars collaborate in an article on 'The Gild of Zeus Hypsistos.' A commentary on the text leads to the conclusion that 'the prohibitions relating to ancient clubs indicate the perils which threatened table-fellowship and illustrate the disorders of the Corinthian Eucharist.' (April).—The brief history of 'The Eastern Christian Sect: the Athinganoi' is the subject of an interesting study by Joshua Starr, New York City. Though the latest of the sects which arose in Phrygia, an Emperor was accredited to it. Moreover, its name is perpetuated 'in the variants whereunder the gypsies are known in Europe to the present day.' The latest results of research are shown to support the view that the Athinganoi were not a branch of the Paulicians for it received co-ordinate standing with them everywhere. In 'Providentia and Aeternitas' Martin Percival Charlesworth, of St. John's College, Cambridge, reviews the evidence which elucidates the significance of these two words in the second century of the Roman Empire, and explains how they 'came to be so associated with the Emperor . . . that they could be regarded as attributes of his.' The hypothesis suggested is that '*Providentia*, whether of the gods or of the Emperor, aims at securing the *aeternitas* of the Roman people and state.' Professor William H. P. Hatch discusses 'The Position of Hebrews in the Canon of the New Testament.' The evidence is classified according as the Epistle is found (i) among the epistles addressed to Churches; (ii) after the epistles written to Churches; (iii) at the end of the Pauline canon. It is claimed that the investigation is instructive because it teaches that 'the canon and text of the New Testament, ecclesiastical organization, and Christian doctrine are all part of one great historical process. . . . The spiritual unity of the Church tended to produce external uniformity.'